THE LAST FRONTIER

ZACK T. SUTLEY

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The Last Frontier

By Zack T. Sutley

119027

The Macmillan Company
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Author's Note

For thirty years I have been urged to record my experiences on the Last Frontier, but a life of unusual activity kept me from doing so. Not till I was nearly eighty years old did I find time to live over, in my mind, the events which I have tried to picture for whatever contribution they may be to an understanding of the pioneer life in the Old West.

If there should be criticism that the personal element is too evident, I can only say, in defense, that I have tried to tell the story of my life on the Last Frontier and what I saw of the changing period from 1867 to 1884, when it was transformed from wild prairie to prosperous farms and ranches and to rich mines and cities, and of the men and women whose lives were a part of its pioneer history.

It is fitting that I should express my appreciation to those who have assisted me: to Rev. T. L. Riggs, who is one of the oldest missionaries to the Indians; to Captain F. M. Ziebach and his son, T. E. Ziebach, of Wessington Springs; to J. D. Hilger, another good friend of long standing who now lives in St. Paul; to General Mark W. Sheafe, Judge W. W. Soule of Rapid City, and W. H. Frost of Fort Pierre, to whom I am grateful for information and encouragement.

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And I am especially indebted to my wife, Anna Bard Sutley, and my daughter, Ina Sutley Blandy, who have so generously assisted and advised me in the preparation of this volume.

Z. T. S.

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THE LAST FRONTIER

Chapter I

HUNTING WITH BUFFALO BILL

THE boat from St. Louis drew up to the landing and negroes on the dock tied the hawser and threw the runplank across to the deck. The passengers had crowded to the edge and as soon as the way was open, we poured down the runway on to the dock. It was the usual crowd, just such a crowd as arrived on every steamboat from St. Louis: a few merchants and other business men returning from the East; one or two gamblers drifting up the river, perhaps to Omaha, which was growing rapidly; a few women usually accompanied by some male relative and maybe a child or two; several families on their way to Kansas or perhaps to California or Oregon; a number of men looking for work in the railroad camps, and one or two young men who like myself had come "out West" to find adventure. Most of these people had come from along the Ohio River, from Kentucky or Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana, or Illinois, but few of them had come from as far east as my home in Pennsylvania.

From the dock, I looked about me inquiringly, then hurried off, bags in hand, to the business part of the town. Past warehouses which stood along the river bank, and the saloons, poolrooms, and cheap boarding houses which clustered along the river front I went, viewing these scenes with little interest, for I had seen such towns all along

the Allegheny and Ohio. Back from the river a short distance and on a little higher ground, were the few streets where the more respectable business was conducted, and crowding in were the dwellings, built upon the bluffs which in some places came down almost to the river's edge. Everywhere was the noise of traffic: shrill whistles from the boats moving up and down the river; teams hauling freight, the clank of harness and creak of the wagons interrupted by the loud and profane commands of the drivers; and pilgrim outfits loading and pulling out for the West to drive across the prairies or, as it was then called, the Great American Desert.

This was Kansas City in the spring of 1867, and as I hurried from the boat to a hotel I felt a thrill of anticipation when I saw the freighters and emigrant trains beginning their drive into Kansas and the buffalo country which I hoped soon to reach, also.

I should have been back in Edinboro, Pennsylvania, at the normal school which I had attended for two years after completing the common school at Cherrytree village. I had been doing advanced work in mathematics and specializing in engineering and surveying, but like many other young men of that time, I had got the "Western fever" and wanted to hunt buffalo on the plains.

From my home near Oil City, I had gone down the Allegheny River on a fleet of lumber with an old friend of my family, who had been a pilot on such fleets for years. At Pittsburgh, he had helped me get a job with another lumber fleet going to Cincinnati, for in that time

logging was nearly as important an industry in western Pennsylvania as the oil drilling which had brought such sudden wealth along Oil Creek in 1859.

These lumber fleets were built up of boards, along the rivers where the logs had been floated down to the sawmills, and were held together in a very simple fashion. Oak or hickory saplings about two inches in diameter were grubbed out of the ground and the roots cut off. Then holes were cut in planks which were dropped over these stakes till they wedged against the root end. Three such planks with grub stakes at each end were laid in a runway close to the water's edge and then thirty layers of lumber were laid across them, alternate layers lying lengthwise with the bottom planks. When the pile was finished, another plank was dropped over the stakes, which were then split and a wedge driven in to hold the boards firmly in place.

This was called a crib and contained about seven thousand feet of lumber. Five or six such cribs, fastened together, one behind another, made a piece, and two or three pieces, fastened side by side, made a string. A string usually had three pieces, and an oar or sweep was attached to the front and rear for steering; in fact each piece was equipped with such an oar, for the strings often had to be cut apart to run single pieces over rapids or through a narrow channel.

A fleet was made up of several such strings and usually took around three hundred fifty thousand feet of lumber. A cook and cookhouse went on each fleet and on each

string was placed a small shack in which the men slept, for two men were needed to handle each string. As a rule, the fleet tied up to the shore for the night and the men rolled out their beds in the doghouse, but in smooth water the fleet was often run on moonlight nights, the men taking turns at work.

To put a fleet of lumber together required several weeks, and when such a fleet was being rafted the river bank around a sawmill was as busy as an ant hill.

From Cincinnati, I had gone by passenger boat to St. Louis and there taken another boat on the Missouri, which had carried me to Kansas City, an orderly little city with about five thousand population and schools and churches. The principal business was the fitting out of wagon trains with freight for points farther west and the equipping of pilgrim wagons, thousands of which crossed the Missouri here and pushed west across Kansas toward the Pacific coast or settled along the route of the Kansas Pacific Railroad, which had built as far as Topeka but was being constructed beyond that place. Kansas City was then the largest city between the Mississippi and the Pacific coast.

I had come West to hunt buffalo, so I at once began to inquire about men who could give me information regarding the buffalo country. I was directed to two old buffalo hunters who were then in town, Bill Cody and John Tennis. These men were old, however, only in experience, for Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill, was only twenty-one, a year or so older than I, although he had been on the

frontier a number of years as a rider for the Pony Express and in 1861 had made an enviable record with that remarkable but short-lived organization by riding three hundred twenty consecutive miles on one trip. He had earned his name from the number of buffalo he had killed to feed the men in the railroad camps in Kansas and the soldiers stationed at the military posts to protect the overland trails.

Tennis was about forty, but had not been on the plains as long as Cody, having come from Ontario to Wisconsin and later down the Mississippi to Missouri, from which it was but a short distance to the herds of buffalo which roamed the plains of western Kansas. They were getting ready to go out on a season's hunt to kill meat for the soldiers and construction gangs and they agreed to take me into their party, provided I got two horses, blankets, and "grub" enough to last for at least two months. I bought these things and, on the advice of the hunters, a Sharp's rifle and a Colt's revolver of .45 caliber. They told me I would need such a rifle to kill buffalo and Indians and I asked why I needed the revolver. I was told I would need that for bad men, and I was to learn later that both weapons were useful for the purposes they were intended.

There were six in our party, each man with two horses, one to ride and the other to carry provisions. We were going into the Smoky Hill River country in western Kansas. Crossing the Kansas River, we rode along this valley for a mile or two through the bluffs which out-

line the course of the Missouri, gradually climbing to the prairie. Then I beheld a sight which was almost beyond my comprehension, for I had my first view of the plains. As I think back to that day, I feel again, after more than sixty years, the awe with which I saw those miles upon miles of prairie, beautiful with its velvety green grass under the clear blue skies of early June. Till then I had known only the wooded hills of Pennsylvania and the rough country along the rivers I had followed on my journey. All the descriptions I had ever read of the great West faded from my mind as I saw those green waves, rolling away to melt into the haze of the distant horizon. Darker green cut across in streaks where the trees marked the valley of some stream, and I thought of the ocean as I had seen it with my father when he had taken me by boat from Baltimore to New York.

The words of the old hymn came to my lips, "The spacious firmament on high, . . . The work of an Almighty hand," but I did not realize, then, the charm which these prairies were to hold for me, calling me back and changing the whole course of my life, for on that day I had no other intention than to return to the normal school in the fall.

As we rode on, day after day, I often wondered how I would have found my way if I had been alone, how I could get back if I wanted to go home before the party was ready to return, and if we should have any trouble with Indians, for they were unusually hostile

that summer. I asked questions continually and I wonder now that the others had so much patience with a tenderfoot. But I suppose my inexperience and desire to learn amused the older hunters and I know they were surprised at my skill in shooting, which perhaps helped to redeem me in their opinions. I had learned to shoot squirrels with an old ball-and-cap rifle and after a few trials with my new Sharp's, I could hit the mark as well as any of the party.

Every day was a new adventure. I learned to pitch a tent, to make a camp and camp fire, to roll my bed, to pack my horse, and to interpret signs along the trail. I was getting my first lessons in plainscraft.

But I was getting more than that, for I was learning to judge men and to realize that every man was judged by the standards of the West for just what he was worth as a citizen and as a contributor to the common good. No one cared where a man came from, who his family were, what his education had been, or what he owned—as long as he acquired it honestly. What people did care about was his ability to take his part in the game of living, in which every one had equal responsibilities, and his inclination to play it straight.

And I was getting a bigger idea of the Creator and His universe, for as I lay in my blankets at night and looked up at the countless stars, I felt very small indeed compared with such majesty.

On the tenth day after leaving Kansas City, we reached Hays City, now called Hays. It was the cen-

ter of railroad activity, though it was only a village, for soldiers were protecting the railroad camps and surveying parties as well as the emigrant trains which were moving by hundreds across the plains to the West Coast. The population was made up mostly of cowboys, gamblers, and bad women, but soldiers were always about the town, and it was the toughest place I had ever seen, although I had seen some pretty wild towns in the oil regions of Pennsylvania between 1859 and 1867. About the nearest thing to law and order was the man who was quickest with his gun, and at the time we arrived, "Wild Bill" Hickok was trying to police the camp with his reputation and six-shooter, each sharing about equally to inspire fear in the lawless element.

The story of Wild Bill, while he was a stock tender for the Overland Mail, of his fight with the McCandless gang which came to his station to steal the stage horses, and of his adventurous life after he became known as a "bad man" was common talk in those days and has been told too often for me to repeat it here. I met Bill then and often talked to him, as did every man who came into camp, but our time was taken up in making arrangements with the government officers and the railroad officials to take the meat as fast as we killed the buffalo, and we spent very little time around the places where Bill was most in evidence.

From Hays City we went on to the Smoky Hill country, which was then literally alive with buffalo. One could ride up on any high ground and see them on the

prairie by thousands. We made our camp on streams where the timber was not too heavy, for we had to be constantly on the lookout for Indian attacks, and while we had to camp where we could get wood and water, heavy timber would have allowed the Indians to slip up on us, unobserved until they attacked.

We hunted in pairs, going out from camp in the early morning in different directions. Tennis was the oldest man in the party and the most experienced plainsman, which perhaps accounts for my particular interest in him, for he was a source of information which later became valuable to me. He and I usually hunted together and thus formed a friendship which continued for many years.

As soon as the buffalo were sighted, we rode to the side of the herd where the wind would not carry the scent of men and horses to them, for these animals have keen scent which warns them of danger even while they feed with heads to the ground. After riding as near as we could without being seen, we would hobble our horses in some ravine or thicket and crawl on to a nearer position, before shooting. Sometimes we would be discovered before any one got a shot and the herd would stampede, running for miles before their fright was overcome or their strength was exhausted. But that was the exception, for most of our men were used to hunting buffalo and generally got near enough to kill or wound several animals before the herd became alarmed.

It was too early in the season for the hides to have any

value and we did not bother to skin the ones we killed. Our business was to kill them for the meat, and as soon as we could get to the animals we shot we bled them, removing the entrails but leaving the heart and liver. Then men who were kept in our camp, hired by the railroad company for that purpose, dragged the carcasses into camp, where they were loaded onto wagons drawn by four-horse teams and taken to Hays City.

Cody had furnished meat to the railroad people the previous summer and he had the contract with them to take the meat which our party killed, but Buffalo Bill himself shot very few of the hundreds of buffalo we killed that summer. He was the boss of the outfit and we all worked under his direction, but he was away from camp a great part of the time, getting provisions and ammunition, picking new camp sites, and looking after the business end of our venture, which kept him in Hays City much of the time.

We did not hunt every day, for there was no regular cook and each man had to take his turn in camp, where two men were always left to protect it while the others hunted. There was enough reason for such precaution, for hardly a day passed that we did not see Indians. Frequently, we had to shoot at them to drive them back from our camp and we had several little skirmishes. The Indians, quite naturally, resented our hunting. The number of buffalo we shot did not matter to them, for the bison were so numerous the few hundred we killed were never missed. But our hunting was driving the herds

farther away on the plains and making it more difficult for the Indians to approach near enough to the buffalo to kill them with bow and arrows or tomahawks as they had to do, while we could shoot from a much greater distance with our long-range rifles.

The Indians made more trouble during that year of 1867 than at any other time in their history, for they were making a last desperate struggle against the railroad building and the flood of settlers which they knew would follow. The Comanches and Arapahoes who roamed over Kansas and Colorado were a constant menace to emigrants, settlers, and hunters and to the mail and stage lines.

We were in danger all the time, both in camp and while hunting, but we were not afraid of the Indians in the daytime, for we could discover them before they got near enough to shoot at us with their poorer weapons and they knew our guns could shoot much farther than theirs. But they would come onto us about daylight and we had defended the camp from several such attacks without any of us being hurt.

My life on the prairie was as full of adventure as I had expected it to be. I was hunting buffalo and shooting at Indians. I was living the life I had pictured—sleeping on the ground under the open sky, aroused in the dim morning light to ward off an attack, then breakfast around the camp fire, and off to ride for miles in search of the big game.

But tragedy is never far from so primitive an exist-

ence and tragedy came to sadden the last days of our camp. One morning about daylight our men were aroused by shots coming from the upper end of the clump of trees in which we were camped. We had not seen any Indians for several days and perhaps had become a little careless in watching for them. We jumped from our blankets and grabbed our rifles. Running toward the place from which the shots had seemed to come, we could see Indians galloping off up the creek and discovered that one of our men was missing. A few minutes' search among the trees and brush revealed the body of Bill James, shot through the breast.

What had caused him to leave camp alone we never knew. Our horses were always hobbled and he may have heard the Indians trying to steal the ponies. He had taken his rifle and we found that beside him, as the Indians must have fled at once without trying to get the gun, much as they valued its possession. They knew the first shot would bring the whole camp after them.

We carried the body back and buried it with the best care we could give. In a trench about five feet deep we laid poles and brush, then lowered the body, wrapped in canvas. More poles were wedged into the sides of the grave, for it was wider at the top and more brush was laid on these poles to keep the dirt off the body. Then the grave was filled and covered with leaves and brush till no trace remained to tell that the earth had been disturbed. We had spread a canvas on which all the dirt had been piled as we dug, and what was left after filling

the grave was carried to the river and thrown into the water.

This was not the first death I had seen nor the first grave I had helped to dig, but it was the first burial I had ever seen away from a church and without a minister. I had a little Bible which I had won at Sunday school as a prize for learning the most verses and I was glad now that I had brought it with me. I read the Twenty-third Psalm as we knelt with bared heads and one of the men led us in a hymn. Then we left him there alone on the prairie—the first of the many I have seen buried in an unknown grave.

I suppose, before this, I had thought very little about death or where I would be buried, but the death of James and the thought of how easily I might have met his fate made me realize how far away I was from the little village where I had grown up, and the quiet churchyard with the old graves and headstones. Perhaps I resolved then to go back as soon as we had finished our hunting, but we were meeting dangers every day and I soon forgot my sadness.

James had told us he had come from near Rochester, Minnesota, and claimed to have been the first white child born in that state. He was about thirty years old when I knew him.

Tennis and I had talked over our plans for the fall and winter and I learned that he was going up into the Rockies to trap. I had thought after the death of James that I wanted to go back to Pennsylvania and to school,

but the prospect of going farther west and trapping in the mountains was too alluring to a young man who had come out to find adventure and I did not speak of my earlier plan when Tennis talked to me about going with him.

So early in September we left the camp and went on west with our horses, although Buffalo Bill and his party intended to stay and hunt as long as the railroad camps kept at work. After that they would provide meat for the soldiers to use during the winter, for it could be frozen and kept as long as the cold weather lasted. The fall hunting was the best, for the hides were valuable by that time and each animal killed was worth more to the hunter, but Tennis did not want to stay there during the winter, and if we were to get located for a season's trapping we had to go early and get our camp built before cold weather came.

CHAPTER II

WE VISIT KIT CARSON

Our hunting with the Cody party had taken us as far west as the springs near the head of the Smoky Hill River, now called Sharon Springs, and from there we struck off to the southwest toward the Arkansas. Reaching this river, we followed up its banks as far as Purgatory Creek, which flows into the Arkansas from the southwest, and then up the creek to near where Trinidad, Colorado, is now located.

The beautiful prairies which had impressed me so much in the spring in eastern Kansas had given way in the Smoky Hill country to more rolling land, and sometimes we found some pretty rough country as we neared the Arkansas. But Tennis had hunted in the Republican country to the north a year or two before, and had a general idea of the elevations and drainage which helped us follow the divides and avoid much of the river breaks.

We were constantly on the lookout for Indians and we used what means we could to prevent them discovering us. We traveled early in the morning and camped late in the afternoon to feed our horses and cook our meal, cooking enough for the next day's breakfast and lunch, for we made no fire in the morning when the smoke could easily be seen. Then after an hour or two of rest, we would ride on ten or twelve miles before camping

for the night, making our camp in the dark and without a fire so the Indians would not know just where to locate us if we had been seen earlier in the day. But we saw nothing of them, although we traveled through Comanche territory and in a country where game was plentiful and we saw many small herds of buffalo scattered along our route. We seldom killed any game as large as a deer or antelope, for we used so little of it and could not carry it with us, but we shot plenty of prairie chickens and grouse and lived well.

After three or four days we reached the Old Santa Fe Trail, and after that we overtook several pilgrim caravans on their way to California, although it was late in the season for them to be on this side of the mountains, and we met a few wagons returning to the east.

On Purgatory Creek we found Colonel Goodnight and his men resting in camp, and we stayed there till the following morning. Goodnight was foreman of the outfit which was returning to Texas after taking several thousand head of cattle north into Colorado and Montana, where the government had purchased them to feed the soldiers and Indians on the reservations.

Colonel Goodnight is still living, though now past ninety years of age, and makes his home at Clarendon, Texas. Since the death of Ezra Meeker, in 1928, Goodnight and myself are the only old frontiersmen of the West who I know are now living. Goodnight has been on the frontier since he was ten years old, serving four years as a Texas Ranger and following the cattle trails

for years. He is credited with having laid off some of the longest trails of any man in the West, but his "range" was mostly in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, New Mexico, and Colorado.

Meeker "blazed the trail" through Nebraska, Wyoming, Idaho, and Oregon to Washington, where he filed the first claim north of the Columbia River in 1853. In 1906 he made his first trip back to Ohio, driving an ox team and a wagon which had some parts taken from the one he had driven out West fifty-three years before, when he located the Meeker or Oregon Trail. The wagon was an old "linchpin" and still showed faint remnants of the original blue paint, for in those days vehicles were built for hard service and new models did not come out every year.

Ezra Meeker was a grand old man and lived a clean, Christian life in spite of the wild frontier conditions with which he was surrounded. In fact, many of the old frontiersmen were of this type.

There have been writers of cheap Western stories who have tried to make the world believe that we men who lived on the frontier were all a rough set, drunkards and bad men generally, but this was not so. A few men like Wild Bill, Captain Slade, "Billy the Kid," Jim Somers, and Jack Kinkade have been pictured as representing all the men of the old West, although such characters were the exception and so stood out against the romantic events of their time. The majority of the frontiersmen were brave and honest men—many were Chris-

tians—who later became the respectable, law-abiding citizens of pioneer days. Considering the life they had to lead, with no churches, no schools, none of the society of women except the rough element, for years at a time no child to fondle and bring their thoughts back to their youth and the better things of life, these men deserve more credit than they have been given.

After leaving Goodnight's camp, where we had learned more about the trails, Tennis and I left the Santa Fe Trail and went on toward Taos, New Mexico, for which place we had been headed since leaving Buffalo Bill. Our purpose was to see Kit Carson and get his advice in regard to the kind of traps and other equipment we should need, as well as the best place to trap during the fall and winter. Carson had traveled over the prairies and mountains for forty years and knew the whole region as well as another man knew his home town, so he could give us a lot of useful information. We stayed at Taos about two weeks and during that time learned a great deal about Carson's earlier life and adventures in the West as well as his suggestions for our trip.

Kit Carson was a native of Kentucky, born in Madison County. He told us he had gone with his parents to Boonville, Missouri, when a young boy and had lived there for some years. When he was about eighteen, he had run away from home and gone farther west with some traders, where he had spent the rest of his life as a guide and trapper. Because of his friendship with influential Indians, he had given valuable service to the government

for which he had been given a military rank. He had served as agent for the Utah Indians and had been a scout for various army expeditions, including those led by General Frémont. Carson's accounts of his many encounters with Indians were most interesting to me who had read so much about him without ever expecting to meet the man who had lived a life so full of adventure that it sounded impossible. But his recital was so frank and without any attempt to make himself a hero that one could not doubt his truthfulness. To him, these adventures which have made him the outstanding figure in the history of the Southwest and the hero of every American boy were only a part of his everyday life, and he told us about trips on which he had encountered wild animals or Indians with no more concern than we told of shooting buffalo all summer.

But I must admit I was disappointed in the appearance of the man, for I had pictured so great a hunter and Indian fighter as a large, well-built man, while Kit Carson was about five feet, nine or ten inches tall and weighed about one hundred sixty pounds. In his youth he had been more slender, but his easy movements showed muscles trained by an active life in the open and he looked much younger than his fifty-eight years. His hair was turning gray, but his eyes were keen and quick and the tanned skin had few wrinkles. Carson was different from many of the scouts and hunters of his time, for he had some education and his association with army men and other people of education had developed his natural refinement.

His Indian wife kept their home neat and provided well-cooked meals, and their home life at the ranch seemed very pleasant, but Carson was suffering from an old wound which troubled him a great deal during the later years of his life.

At Taos, we met a man named Cook who wanted to go north with us, and as we each had two horses he got two also and "grub" and bedding. We three left Taos about the first of October, 1867, and started north to the headwaters of the Arkansas where Carson had told us we would find the best place for our winter's hunting and trapping.

Leaving Taos, we followed up the east side of the Rio Grande,, along trails which had been used by the Indians and early trappers, but in some places were so overgrown that we had to pick our own way, hoping that we should strike the old trail again and not have to go round a canyon or small mountain. On the whole we had very little trouble finding our way, for Kit Carson had given us careful directions as to the trails we should take, and the route north from Taos did not take us through any rougher country than Tennis and I had traversed on our trip across the southern end of the Culebras from Purgatory Creek to Taos.

I had felt at home in that region, for the mountains were not high and were covered with grass and trees very much like the mountains of Pennsylvania. The truth is, I could not understand why I did not care more about going back, but was more satisfied each day as I went on

into the mountains and we talked of our plans for spending the winter in a rough camp, isolated from any white man by miles of snow-bound trails. We began to think the entire region was without any inhabitants, for we saw no Indians after leaving Taos and only one or two miserable camps in which a few Mexicans lived like the Indians by fishing and hunting. But I did think sometimes of how my brothers and the other boys I knew would have enjoyed being with me and of the adventures I would have to tell them about when I did go home in the spring.

We did not get into the real mountainous region till after we had traversed the San Luis Valley, which extends about a hundred miles along the west side of the Sangre de Cristo and Culebra ranges. But we could not take a direct route across this giant lake bed, which would have shortened our journey by many miles, for we had to keep close enough to the foot of the mountains to get wood and water. As a rule, the frontiersmen were not inclined to imagination but accepted what they found and made what use of it they could. All we saw in the valley was a great bed of sand which clearly had once been the bed of a great lake but was now sparsely covered with sage and mesquite brush, among which roamed wolves and coyotes and a few small herds of buffalo. But the lack of grass and water in the valley kept the buffalo close to the foothills as it did us and we did not see anything about this great basin which would ever make it useful. It seemed too far away from the paths men followed.

Our wildest imagining would never have pictured it as it is to-day with rich and fertile farms watered by the melted snow, brought from the mountains.

Our course took us over more rolling land than the valley, but we had fine pasture for our horses and cool water from the clear streams which rippled down the mountainsides. Mountain trout darted among the stones and we had several meals of fish but did not stop to catch more than we could eat at a meal, for we had no time to linger along the trail.

Off to our right rose Blanca, the highest peak in the Rockies, its snow-capped summit reaching high above the timber which covered the mountainsides above the grassy slopes. We had seen this mountain to the northwest of us as we had gone down to Taos, but now it was northeast. Day after day we tramped on toward its splendor and then we were almost in its shadow for several days before we left it behind us to keep watch over the lonely valley. In the mornings, we saw the rising sun flood its snow with rosy blushes long before we could see to travel, and at night, after the early darkness had settled over the camp, we watched the crimson light linger and sparkle on the western slopes for hours after the sun had dropped behind the San Juan range across the valley. In its solitary majesty, the peak became more than a mountain to me, and seemed like a lone sentinel over whose feet we crawled like ants while he guarded the sandy plain to the west and the vast prairies to the east.

We had no time to stop and explore, for already the

coolness of morning and evening was warning us that winter was soon to follow and we had a lot to do before we could have our camp ready for winter. At the upper end of San Luis, we struck an Indian trail which led us over the Sangre de Cristo into the valley of the Arkansas. Here I got my first clear conception of the mountains, for until we crossed the divide we had been too far away and too far below them to view more than a small section, but on the divide we could look off as far as eye could reach and see great granite peaks in every direction. I marveled that even the Indians had found a trail such as we were then following, by which they could thread their way up and across a range among such chasms and steep, barren rocks. Already many of the peaks were covered with snow besides the higher ones on which the snow never melted. I looked about me in wonder and awe and thought again in the words of the hymn, "The hand that made us is divine."

Near the present site of Salida we camped a few days while we scouted for a permanent location, and about twenty miles north and west we built our cabin and established winter quarters. We had been on the trail about fifteen days, walking the entire distance, as our six horses were loaded with our supplies, altogether about fifteen hundred pounds.

Each man had about twenty traps of several sizes, for mink and bear and beaver. We had brought a small cross-cut saw, an auger, a trowel, hammer and nails, two ax heads for which we made handles, and three trace chains,

all of which Carson had helped us to select. He took much more interest in our outfitting than we had expected, for he seemed pleased by our coming to get his advice.

Besides these tools, we also had a scythe and fork for haying, because Carson had said, "Boys, the first thing you do after locating your camp is to make your hay before winter sets in. If you don't, your horses will starve to death and you'll be left with no way to get your furs out in the spring."

We built a small sled and a rack for it and put up six or eight tons of hay, hauling it from the flats along the creek to the spring where we had planned to build our cabin. Of course we had no harness, but pulled the sled with picket ropes attached to our saddle horns. Then we cut pine logs for the shack and barn, dragging them into camp with the picket ropes tied to the chains we had fastened around them. Next we hauled stone on our sled for the fireplace, using mud and sticks for the chimney. We cut poles for rafters, which we covered with pine and cedar boughs, then hay and dirt on top. The cracks between the logs were filled with mud and a hole which we left for a window was covered at night with a piece of canvas.

After our buildings were up, we shot two of our horses and laid the meat on the roof of the stable to be used for bait. Every night, we built a fire on the roof to keep away the mountain lions, bears, wildcats, and lynxes. During the winter, we killed four lions, two bears, and

many cats. When the first snow came, we killed ten or twelve black-tailed deer which supplied us with meat and tallow for light and we lived well on the salt pork, beans, flour, baking powder, coffee, dried apples, and sugar we had brought with us.

We had plenty of wood and the fire in our grate was never out during the whole winter. Our day began about six o'clock, and as soon as we had breakfast we left to visit the traps. We did not find game in every trap, but seldom returned without one or two pelts at least. When we found an animal in a trap, we killed and skinned it, then went on to the next trap on the line. After reaching camp in the evening, we stretched the skins, then cleaned up the camp and got supper, and how good it tasted after we had been out in the cold all day!—fried venison and biscuit baked in a Dutch oven in the ashes, gravy, coffee, and apple sauce. Or perhaps it was venison stew or baked beans with pork and sometimes bean soup. What a wonderful winter I was having, and what accounts I planned to give when I went back home with the money from my trapping!

We had a fine winter and very little bad weather to interfere with our visiting the traps and not an Indian disturbed us, but in January we were saddened by the death of Cook, who was sick about ten days. We could do very little for him, as we had not anticipated such a need and had very little medicine with us. We buried him there in another unknown grave, after wrapping the body in a blanket and placing it in a frame of poles. Over the

grave we scattered sticks and leaves to keep the Indians from finding it, but so vivid were these scenes in the mind of a boy not yet twenty, I think I could go back to-day and locate this grave and the others I have helped to make. Cook had come from Indiana four or five years before, but we did not know the address of his people and could never notify them of his death.

Tennis was a good story-teller and they called me the "Deacon" because I often read my Bible in the long evenings, but Cook was a fine, jolly fellow and a good singer, so after his death Tennis and I were lonesome and sad the rest of the winter and decided to get out of the mountains as soon as we could follow the trails.

Kit Carson had told us we could not follow down the Arkansas River because of the gorge where it cuts through the mountains, and early in the spring, Tennis and I took our camp outfit and went down to see it. We traveled about forty miles from our cabin along the west side of the river, following its banks as it wound through the mountains till we came to the head of the canyon through which the water rushes. Here we spent hours in admiration of the winding gorge with such steep sides that there was no room for even a narrow trail. I had never seen anything like it and never since have I seen a grander sight or one to rival it. How little we thought that some day a railroad would blast its way along the banks of this stream and hang its bridges from the sides of the cliffs!

But we were convinced that we could not get out along

the Arkansas and planned to go farther north. About the tenth of April, after the snow had melted, Tennis and I broke camp, burying our traps and tools but taking with us the four horses, our saddles, furs, and the remainder of our provisions. We followed up the Arkansas a short distance, then crossed the divide to the east and struck the head of a stream which we later were to learn was the South Platte. This we followed to Denver, where we sold our furs and two of our horses. From Denver, then only a village, we wrote to Kit Carson, telling him where we had built our cabin, of the success we had had, and where we had buried our stuff, which he could have if he wanted it. But he probably never found it, as he died that year, 1868.

Tennis and I furnished a good deal of amusement to Denver by our uncouth appearance, for we wore buckskin suits, caps which we had made during the winter from beaver skins, Indian moccasins, and nearly a year's growth of beard and hair, as this was long before the days of safety razors. We were good imitations of the pictures I had seen of Daniel Boone in his frontier clothes and I felt proud of looking like a hero of my school days. One of the first things we did, however, was to get shaved and have our hair cut, then get "white man's clothes," which we had not worn since we had left Kansas City the summer before.

We had between five and six hundred dollars for our winter's trapping and enjoyed the entertainment which Denver had to offer, especially the exchange of experi-

ences with other trappers who were coming in daily from their winter camps.

In Denver, we learned that the Union Pacific was building to Salt Lake City and Tennis decided to go on to the coast. I gave up my plan of returning to Pennsylvania till fall and decided to go with him. We rode to Cheyenne City, which was little more than a railroad camp, where we sold our horses, but took our saddles with us on the train to Salt Lake, at that time the end of the railroad and the center of much development. Here Tennis bought another horse and went north into Idaho. From there he drifted west into Oregon and Washington, and though I heard from him several times I did not see him again till 1880.

CHAPTER III

BRIGHAM YOUNG AND JIM BRIDGER

Besides the railroad building both east and west of Salt Lake City, the mines were being developed in Utah and Idaho and Brigham Young was working on his great irrigation system. The latter interested me more than the railroading, mining, or even the hunting, as I had been studying engineering before I left Pennsylvania, and soon after our arrival I went to work for Young.

It had been twenty-one years since the Mormons had first settled on the shores of Great Salt Lake and the city was now past the pioneer stage. The railroad building and the trails to California had brought much unexpected business and had provided the Mormon farmers and business men with better markets than they had ever dreamed could be found in the region they had taken for their homes. The city was growing rapidly and every one was prospering, consequently the social affairs were many and Salt Lake was a busy and lively place. I had very little opportunity, however, of meeting the Mormon families in a social way, for so many of the women had followed the freight and emigrant outfits to California that bitter feeling against strangers had been aroused and it was dangerous for a "Gentile" to be seen in conversation with a Mormon woman.

The progress which the Mormons had made from the

beginning of their church had been in spite of opposition from their neighbors and the authorities, and their early years in Utah had been filled with troubles between them and the United States Government because of their practice of polygamy and their treatment of pilgrim wagons. But the Mountain Meadows massacre, which had aroused the whole nation, had occurred more than ten years before my visit, and though rumors held Mormon influence responsible for the tragedy, the report of Brigham Young as Superintendent of Indian Affairs had apparently been accepted and officially the blame had been placed on the Indians. The territory was enjoying peace and the prosperity which usually attends it. During the time I was in Salt Lake City, they were anxious to have Utah admitted as a state into the Union, so were on good behavior, generally.

I was very much interested in the unusual appearance of the town, which was planned and laid out before it was built and unlike so many cities which grow up around some country store. I had never seen such wide streets nor such immense blocks, for the original plat had blocks of ten acres each. Already there were several buildings which gave a citified appearance to the streets. The theater had been opened in 1862 and the Temple had been in the course of construction since 1853, the work being discontinued as it had been hindered by lack of funds. The remarkable Tabernacle was already famous and was one of the Mormons' proudest achievements.

It seemed to me that I had never seen so perfect a site

for a city. With mountains on all sides, the wide valley had just enough slope for good drainage, while the protection from storms and the low altitude gave pleasant winters. In summer, a short drive took one to the mountains or to the lake. It impressed me as being marvelous that the Mormons, claiming to have newer revelations from the Lord and to be His chosen people, should have made a journey so much like the wanderings of the Hebrews and found a location so much like the Holy Land. After the Israelites had journeyed across the wilderness, they found a home in a valley where Lake Gennesaret, a pool of fresh water, was drained by the Jordan River into the Dead Sea, which is salt water. The Mormons traveled across the Great American Desert not knowing where they were going and found Lake Utah, which is fresh water, drained by a river, which they named Jordan, into the Great Salt Lake.

I have often thought that Brigham Young was a greater man than Moses, for Young led his people from Council Bluffs, Iowa, through hostile Indian country much farther than Moses took the Israelites, and he made them prosperous and happy while none of Moses' people ever reached the Promised Land. "Brother" Young was a fine man and a great financier. Although he was then nearly seventy years old, he was strong and active and spent a great deal of time on the irrigation project. We had many a talk as we went over the work which was then taking his attention. He wanted me to join the Mormon Church, but this I could not be persuaded to do; and he

never showed any resentment toward me, although he often showed me where it would be to my advantage, through his influence. At that time he had, according to popular reports, seventeen wives, and one time when he was talking about me becoming a Mormon, I asked him, in a joke, if he would give me one of his wives if I would join the Church.

He said he would, and one Sunday afternoon took me home with him to see the wife he intended to give me, although, of course, she did not know the purpose of our call. She was a very bright and interesting woman, and later I asked "Brother" Young why he wanted me to marry her. He said it was because she wanted to be sealed to him and he either could not or would not be sealed to her. I told him that if he would not be sealed to her, then I would not be sealed either.

Several years later, I met Ann Eliza, for it was she, in St. Paul. She had left the Mormon Church and sued for a divorce from Young. She was traveling through the country, lecturing on the evils of Mormonism, abusing Young and the Church, but I told her I had no sympathy for her or any one who had joined the Church, for they had not been compelled to do so any more than I had been. In the two years I lived among the Mormons and worked for Young, I never knew of a person not being free to come and go as he pleased. Ann Eliza asked me why Brigham Young had taken me with him to call on her that Sunday in Salt Lake City, for she said it had been very unusual for him to introduce a young man,

especially a Gentile, to any of his wives. I told her about Young's offer to me and she laughed over it, saying: "That was just like the old hypocrite. He had not kept his promises to me and we had been having some trouble. I suppose he thought I might run away with some one and then he could divorce me."

In general, I found the Mormons were a happy and contented people. There were few rich families and few poor ones, for the Church saw that every one was cared for when it was necessary, and every one had a comfortable living for that time. Brigham Young was sensible enough to know that he could control his people best by supplying their need for social and material life as well as religious, so instead of giving them charity when it was needed, he built a wall around the city and dug ditches for irrigation, giving them work rather than charity. He built a fine theater and brought the best players to Salt Lake, besides organizing societies for amateur theatricals. Young wanted every one to think he shared in what the Church could provide, and if a young man wanted to take his girl to the theater but did not have money, he could take some potatoes, onions, a squash, or whatever he had and trade it for the tickets. The following day the vegetables were sold even though they might not bring enough to pay for the tickets, for the theater was operated for the amusement of the people rather than for profit.

While in Salt Lake City, I became acquainted with Jim Bridger, the famous guide and trapper of the West, and in the fall of 1868 I went with him up into the Wind

River Mountains to trap. We had four horses to carry our provisions and my traps, for Bridger had been trapping there the winter before and had cached his traps.

Our whole trip was through a charming mountainous country, following winding streams which led along beautiful valleys with the snow-covered mountains always in sight beyond. The days were short, and in the valleys twilight came early, but the rays of the setting sun shone red on the snowy peaks for two hours longer. Deer and elk and all sorts of feathered game were plentiful. Occasionally we saw a few buffalo or a bear or mountain lion, but the scenery, although beautiful, did not impress me now as it had the winter before in Colorado when I first entered the mountains. It did interest me, however, to know that I was traveling a great continental divide which I had traced so many times in my geography at school, and I wondered how the spot where we were camped would appear on my old map. A few miles to the west were the beginnings of the Snake River which fed the Columbia and sent its waters on to the Pacific. East of us were the headwaters of the Platte and the Yellowstone, which finally reached the Gulf of Mexico through the Missouri and the Mississippi, and to our south was the Green River which reached the Pacific through the Colorado and the Gulf of California.

We found his shack and stable just as Bridger had left them the spring before, as the Indians had not molested anything, and all we had to do was make hay for the ponies to be ready for winter. We did well trapping that

season, and in the spring went back to Salt Lake City, from which we shipped our furs to St. Louis, already the best fur market in the country.

That summer of 1869 I worked again for Brigham Young, but in the fall Bridger and I went back to northwestern Wyoming to trap. On this second trip we were accompanied by a Sioux half-breed named Napoleon de Rocheau. He had been born and raised near Big Stone Lake in Minnesota and had some education, speaking French and a little English besides his native Dakota language. In fact, we all increased our conversational ability that winter, for Bridger spoke the Blackfoot language fluently, having married a woman of that tribe and lived among them for years. De Rocheau and I learned something of their language from him and we later found it very useful. Bridger and I learned to talk Sioux from De Rocheau and he gained more English from us.

Each man was sharing equally in the expense of the trip and would receive an equal share of the furs, so was supposed to share all the work and give equal time to his traps. But Bridger was kind enough to go out with us to set all our traps at first and to show us how to bait them, for De Rocheau and I were not familiar with that country although w had both trapped before. Most of the daylight hours were spent in visiting the traps, but the evenings were filled by Bridger telling his experiences during the forty years and more he had been on the plains and in the mountains as a guide and trapper. We had no books or papers to read, except my little Bible,

which became very interesting, especially to Bridger who could neither read nor write but often asked me to read a "Bible story."

Although uneducated, Bridger was not an ignorant man and was an interesting companion because of his wide travels. He was honest and truthful and was respected by all who knew him. The Indians, who despise a liar, trusted Bridger completely. But he had neither the education nor the natural refinement that marked Kit Carson. They had both lived thrilling lives on the plains and among the Indians, but Carson would have been at ease in any group he might have met, while Bridger was coarser by nature and lacked the education and experience to be natural in any society other than that in which he had lived.

Some writers have tried to make out that Bridger was a notorious liar, but this was not so. At one time the whole country talked about "Jim Bridger's Lies," which were his reports of the geysers and Yellowstone Lake. Bridger had explored the region while trapping for the American Fur Company and gave the first accounts of this strange area to the public. They seemed impossible, but further exploration and more general travel supported Bridger's stories of these natural wonders.

Years ago, Buntline wrote what he called "Jim Bridger's Lies," but they should have been called "Buntline's Lies," for I doubt if Bridger ever heard of them. Another writer of such Western stories was Beadle, but he did not claim they were true or he never would have told the

story of the trip he made from Montana to Texas, wearing a buckskin suit.

He left Montana in the dry season, but as he went south he found rainy weather and the buckskin pants began to stretch so he cut them off. He did this several times as the rain continued and the pants continued to stretch. They fitted all right as long as he stayed in Texas, but on the return trip he struck dry weather as he went north and the pants began to shrink. So by the time he reached Montana he had only a breechcloth. This story was written when buckskin suits were still worn in the West and it gave the cowboys and hunters many a good laugh, for they knew only a tenderfoot would have cut off the pants because they stretched. We rolled them up when they got wet and rolled them down again as they dried.

Although he has been credited with having done so, Bridger never claimed to me that he had discovered Yellowstone Lake and the wonderful geysers which are in the present Yellowstone Park. He told us he had not visited the region till 1832, but had heard about it from Coulter, who claimed to have been there in 1807 and to have been the first white man to view it. Coulter had been one of the Lewis and Clark party and had made the trip overland to the Pacific coast. On the return in 1806, Coulter had become separated from the party and had lived for many years with the Indians of the Blackfoot tribe and it was there Bridger had known him.

At the time I knew Bridger, he was an old man in the sixties and his story corresponds in dates and facts with

what I afterward learned from Narcelle, who had been with the Lewis and Clark party. Narcelle knew about the disappearance of Coulter, but he did not know he had escaped the hostile Indians till I told of Bridger's acquaintance with him.

Narcelle was the only member of this famous expedition whom I ever met. He had left St. Louis a boy about fifteen years old, and had made the trip to the Pacific, but on the return he had stopped to trap near the present location of Fort Pierre, South Dakota. Later he had married a Sioux woman, and he lived in that vicinity until his death, when he was close to one hundred years of age.

It had now been three years since I had left Pennsylvania, although I had come out West expecting to return in a few months. I had found the West more interesting than I had anticipated, so I had postponed my return from fall till spring and from spring till fall and again it was spring and I was debating the question of my return. I was getting tired of such a roving life, for I had done all the things I had come West to do and I had seen all I had wanted to see. I had hunted buffalo. I had seen the great plains and prairies. I had lived in the mountains with famous hunters, and I was satisfied that I had seen all I cared to see of the West. I was ready to return to the States.

So in the spring of 1870, instead of going back to Salt Lake, the half-breed and I let Jim Bridger take our furs down to the Union Pacific Railroad and ship them to St.

Louis. Each man had his furs marked and the following summer we received every dollar that was due us, which shows that Bridger was honest, as he could easily have sold all the furs in his name and received all the money.

The half-breed and I got two more ponies from the Indians to carry our bedding and what grub we had left, and about the first of April left Bridger in camp, intending to leave on the following day. That was the last time I ever saw or heard from him except to receive the money for the furs, and that was sent from the buyer in St. Louis.

De Rocheau and I had heard so much about Yellowstone Lake from Bridger that we decided to visit that region and traveled north for several days till we reached the Lake. Here we camped and rested for a day or two, but did not go on north to see the geysers as we had planned, for the trails were almost impassable. One who goes through the park to-day, riding over fine roads, can have no idea of what we encountered nearly sixty years ago. The entire section was a wild, mountainous country and up to that time had been visited by only a few white men. Even the Indians avoided it, for they thought it was the home of evil spirits.

Leaving the Lake, we struck off to the east and followed down the Shoshone River to the Big Horn. Bridger had given us the general route of the trail we should take and we met parties of friendly Indians who directed us along the way. These were Blackfeet or Mandan and Sioux with whom De Rocheau could talk freely, and in

their way they entertained us gladly. Our guns were a great source of surprise and concern to them, as they had never before seen such big ones, and after looking at and handling my Sharp's rifle, the Indians would point to it and say "*Sicha,*" which means "Bad."

The trail led down the Bighorn to the Yellowstone, then east along the bank of this river to Fort Keogh, where we left the river and struck off to the east, crossing the Tongue, the Powder, and later the Little Missouri. We followed down the Heart River to the Missouri and Fort Abraham Lincoln, which we reached about the first of June. We had traveled over eight hundred miles in about forty days through wild Indian country, but had no trouble and no especial difficulty to mark the trip, although we and our ponies, too, were tired out when we reached Lincoln. We had killed plenty of game along the way, and our food had lasted till we reached Fort Keogh, where we laid in a new supply. I recall that we bought two hundred pounds of oats for the ponies, paying ten dollars a hundred and from there the horses had to carry their own feed as well as ours.

After we got out of the Yellowstone Lake country, we had well-marked trails through beautiful scenery, for the rugged mountains were behind us and the wooded hills between which flowed the clear, cold streams were soon replaced by the rolling prairies. The place of greatest interest was the Bad Lands, or Mauvais Terres, from which flows the Little Missouri. Here the hills were of weird and fantastic shapes, being of sandstone which had been

worn for ages by the wind and water, and were without vegetation.

At Fort Abraham Lincoln, we got shaved and had our hair cut for the first time since leaving Salt Lake the previous autumn, but we had to wait for new clothes till we reached Yankton. The next day after our arrival at Lincoln, the first boat to come up the river that year reached the post, so we sold our ponies and saddles and went on the boat down the river to Yankton, then the capital of Dakota Territory. Here De Rocheau left me, but I stayed in Yankton a few days trying to find work with surveying parties. I was told that the work would not begin, for no appropriation had been made by Congress, although the work had been ordered done. So I went by stage to Sioux City and then by train to St. Paul to visit my great-uncle, Alexander Ramsey.

CHAPTER IV

ST. PAUL AND HUDSON BAY

Uncle Alex Ramsey was my grandmother's youngest brother, and in 1849 he had been appointed governor of Minnesota Territory by President Zachary Taylor, for whom I was named. After serving for a number of years as governor, during which time he made many important treaties with the Indians, he was elected to the United States Senate and served there twelve years before he was appointed Secretary of War by President Hayes in 1877. Uncle Alex was in Washington when I reached St. Paul, so I did not get to see him, but at the hotel I met several men who were getting ready to go to Montana to the new gold field which had just been located in that territory, and they wanted me to take charge of the party and supervise the buying of supplies as well as act as guide through the Yellowstone country which I had just traversed.

Our party, ten in all, went to Duluth, where we boarded the Northern Pacific which was then completed nearly as far west as the present city of Moorhead and was running a mixed freight and passenger train as far as Brainerd. A construction train took us on to Moorhead, and there we hired a man with a span of mules to take our grub and beds west to the Missouri River, over two hundred miles, for which we paid him one hundred dollars.

Our destination was Burleigh, near the present location of Bismarck, which at that time was only a wood yard run by Jim Monkhouse. Monkhouse was well known along the Missouri River and lived out his life in the West. He died a few years ago in Pierre, where he had made his home for many years.

Boats on the upper Missouri in those days used nothing but wood for fuel, and these wood yards were located along the river from Sioux City to Great Falls, Montana, which was the end of navigation. Often the wood supply would be used up before arriving at the next yard and the boat would tie up to a tree on the bank while the crew and passengers cut wood. Even the women worked, carrying the wood while the men chopped.

The only diversion on our trip before reaching Burleigh was at the James River, where we found about two hundred and fifty soldiers stationed at a military post, although not more than twenty-five were at the post when we arrived. The others were off on scouting trips or chasing Indians—I mean chasing them, as the soldiers seldom caught any.

When the Indians went on the warpath, they had four or five ponies for each man or woman in the party. They drove the extra ponies ahead and as the ponies traveled over the prairie during the day they frequently cropped grass and did not have to stop to feed. After riding one pony ten or fifteen miles an Indian caught another pony and the one he turned loose could eat. One end of his

lariat made a hackamore on the pony he rode and the other end dragged behind on the ground so he could catch it if he were shot or hurt in any way and fell from his pony. When he caught a fresh horse, he made a hackamore with the free end of his rope before he changed his saddle, if he had a saddle, which was seldom, or turned loose the pony he had been riding.

The soldiers were handicapped in the chase, as they could not travel more than the distance covered by their wagon train which carried the grub and bedding, only about thirty or thirty-five miles a day, even on a forced march, and the troop often had to stop to cut down trees or get timber and build a bridge across a stream which the Indians easily forded or swam.

Two good men on two fast horses and armed with Sharp's rifles could go out after a whole band of Indians and run them out of the country as Nels and Charley Allen did in 1878. The Indians had stolen horses in Montana and were running them to the Pine Ridge Agency southeast of the Black Hills. The Allens lived on Rapid Creek east of Rapid City and discovered the Indian band with the herd of horses, which they could see were not Indian ponies and had probably been stolen. Mounted on good horses, they soon overtook the Indians and, riding up, one on each side, the Allens shot over the band without trying to kill any one. They rode for several miles and continued shooting till the Indians, realizing the danger to their women and children, cut back the horses and rode away. The Allen boys took the horses,

nearly a hundred head, to their ranch and later they were claimed by the owners.

We reached the Missouri River about the last of June, 1870, nearly a month after De Rocheau and I had left Fort Lincoln. Before leaving St. Paul, we had been told that the boats went up the river nearly every day and that we would not have to wait for one to take us to Montana. The day after we reached the river, the *Dakota*, owned by Captain Burleigh of Yankton, tied up at Monkhouse's wood yard and we prepared to go aboard. But this boat was loaded with supplies for the fort and was not going farther up the river. Captain Burleigh told us the *Far West* would be going up in about ten days. He offered us fifty cents an hour to go across to the fort with him and unload his boat and five or six of us went.

When the boat had landed and the runplank had been thrown out, Burleigh ordered a barrel of whisky rolled out on deck and onto two sticks of cordwood. He then took a brace and bit and bored a hole in the end, letting the whisky run out into a dishpan from which the soldiers and "river roosters," as the roustabouts were called, drank it with tin cups. By the time the boat was unloaded, most of the men except those from our camp were drunk.

That day Captain Burleigh called me "Custer" and the name stuck to me for years. I asked him why he called me that and he said:

"Because you're just like him—you'll tackle anything."

This was no exaggeration, for at that time I was twenty-

two years old, six feet, one inch tall, and weighed more than one hundred ninety pounds. My three years in the West had been filled with incidents which few men, even for that time, had experienced and I felt equal to any occasion. Burleigh wanted me to return to Yankton with him on the boat and said, "I will make a man of you yet," but I was so disgusted with that whisky drinking that I told the party I was with that I was too far west when they drank whisky out of a dishpan with tin cups and that I was going back to the States. When we returned to the camp, three of us sold our share of the grub and outfit to the others and went down to Yankton on the boat.

One of these men, Keyes, did stay with Burleigh and became wealthy. Burleigh had been an Indian agent some years before, but through some irregularities was in disfavor with the government and could not get contracts for furnishing provisions or transportation to the military posts or Indian agencies. But Keyes got the contracts and Burleigh did the transporting and they divided the profits.

After spending a few days in Yankton, I returned to St. Paul and through the influence of my uncle, Alex Ramsey, who had then returned from Washington, I found a position in the office of the American Express Company.

St. Paul was a city of perhaps twenty thousand, but the only railroad connections it had were the Milwaukee which ran to Chicago, the Omaha running south to Sioux

City and Omaha, and the Lake Superior & Mississippi which connected with the Northern Pacific near Duluth. The Northern Pacific was under construction and during the year completed its road to the Red River. During my stay, the St. Paul & Pacific built as far west as Alexandria, which was the terminus until James J. Hill got control of the road in 1876 and developed it into the Great Northern system.

The bulk of the shipping to which St. Paul owed its development was on the Mississippi, goods coming by boat from St. Louis and New Orleans and even as far as Pittsburgh. Most of the grain was hauled to the river, sometimes as far as seventy or eighty miles. The big elevators were built on the river banks where the boats could be loaded. Passenger boats—floating palaces, with their lavish furnishings—steamed up and down the river from the Gulf to St. Paul, which was the head of navigation, and interrupted the monotony of the river towns with their shrill whistles. Every boat had an elaborate bar and gambling flourished. Instead of "road houses" which have grown up with automobile travel, dance and show boats traversed the river, stopping at the towns along the banks. Often a disturbance on one of the "gun-boats" as the rougher ones were called, aroused the anger of the better citizens, who would gather on the river bank and cut the boat loose, it floating downstream till it got up enough steam to proceed to another town.

Competition was strong among the various boat lines and a rate war made low fares common. I made one trip

to St. Louis and return, with cabin and meals included, for three dollars. Constant rivalry existed between the crews of several boats and racing was a daily occurrence. These races would generally be started by one boat attempting to pass another, an insult which could not go unnoticed. Passengers joined in the excitement as well as the officers and crew, and when the fuel ran low, furniture, good lumber, or any part of the cargo which would burn was thrown into the fire box. During one such race, I saw linseed oil and sides of bacon go in, while I was standing with other passengers beside the engine helping to lift the governor and in this way increase the power. At another time, some one had tied down the steam gauge on the boiler so the steam could not blow off and there was nothing to indicate how much we were carrying. The engineer realized something was wrong and called the chief engineer who rushed down, swearing, six-shooter in hand. He released the gauge and for the remainder of the race commanded the engine room.

At that time, two streets, Third and Jackson, made up the greater portion of the business section of St. Paul. Paving of any kind was unknown till 1872 when Third was paved for some distance with wooden blocks. The streets, where Fourth and Cedar intersected, had been cut through the lime rock which rose from ten to fifteen feet along the south side of Fourth. In 1872, the real-estate firm of Cochran & Walsh offered me this corner with a fifty-foot front on Fourth Street for five hundred dollars, but I laughed at them for thinking any one would

pay such an amount for that "rock pile." A few years later this corner was sold for twenty thousand, and it is the present site of the Globe Building.

A truck gardener on the edge of town wanted three hundred dollars for three acres, and this land is now only a few blocks from the Capitol Building.

Street-car lines were not built till 1872 when the first cars were drawn by mules on Fourth Street from Jackson Street out to Seven Corners, but we felt a deep pride in our citified appearance. Livery stables did a flourishing business, and fine horses and carriages could be hired for pleasure or sight-seeing trips to White Bear Lake or Stillwater.

The most popular trip was past Lake Como, the Bridal Veil Falls, Faun's Leap, and St. Anthony's Falls to Minneapolis over the Hennepin Avenue bridge, which was one point of interest, as it was the only suspension bridge on the upper Mississippi. After dinner at the old Nicolet Hotel, then a show place in the city, the return was made past Minnehaha Falls, even then famous from Longfellow's "Hiawatha" and Lieutenant Noble's "Song of Minnehaha." Then came Fort Snelling, for many years the most important military post in the Northwest, and the river again, which was now crossed by ferry to see Fountain Cave before reaching St. Paul. The entire trip covered about thirty miles.

During my residence in St. Paul, I met many and became acquainted with some men who later occupied positions of note in the financial and political life of this

country. C. K. Davis, then a small-town lawyer, later became governor and served many years in the United States Senate, one of the leaders in his party. Another governor, Merriam, was then connected with the First National Bank. Van Sant, whom I first knew as a captain of a steamboat, also was elected governor, and James J. Hill was agent for a steamboat company and I called almost daily at his office. After gaining control of the St. Paul & Pacific Railroad, which was in the hands of a receiver, Hill became the "Empire Builder" of the Western United States by his extensions of the Great Northern.

Captain Baker, Captain Carver, and General Averill were other leading citizens, active in the early growth of the city and state, whom I met frequently. Dan Hanna, a brother of the late Mark Hanna, was in the coal business and we often drove together, for, like the other young men, I had acquired a horse and buggy for my own use. Two other associates were Colonel Ames of St. Paul and Colonel King of Minneapolis, leading stockmen of the section, who brought the first shorthorn cattle into Minnesota. Because of my knowledge of shorthorns, gained on my father's farm in Pennsylvania, I spent a good deal of time with Colonel Ames on his farms and accompanied him on one trip to Kentucky to buy cattle at the Alexander Farm, leading shorthorn breeders, where I had previously gone with my father.

The Ames family had been prominent in social, political, and industrial circles in Massachusetts since colonial days, and the colonel's residence, which occupied the pres-

ent site of the state capitol, had many noted visitors, a number of whom I had the pleasure of meeting. I do not mention these early acquaintances with any conceit, but my admiration for men of this type was always at war with my love of adventure, drawing me back from the frontier to more refined associations again and again, and finally winning me from the more romantic to the more lasting responsibilities of citizenship.

Minneapolis was then about twenty years old and had not over ten thousand inhabitants, most of whom were on the east side of the river in a village which was called St. Anthony. The only important industry was lumbering, which employed the men in the mills or on log drives in the summer months, but the winters they spent in the lumber camps to the north. The Judd residence, completed in 1872, was for many years a show place, as it was unequaled in the Northwest. Social affairs were conducted in a true Western spirit, of which I can give no better example than my attendance at the house-warming ball given in the Judd mansion, although less than two years before I had come in off the trail, unshaven and dressed in buckskin.

I had no intention of returning to an outdoor life, but in 1871 the Northwestern Transportation Company started a stage line from Alexandria, the end of the St. Paul & Pacific, to Fort Garry, Manitoba, over three hundred miles to the north. These stages were the old Concord coaches and were drawn by four horses except when the bad roads, due to stormy weather or rough country,

made it necessary to use six. Seven miles an hour was the average speed and the trip was made in two days and nights, for the mail contracts went to the company which made the best time and the coaches traveled all night, if necessary, to make the trip on time, changing horses at stations maintained for that purpose along the line. Passengers and express were carried on the stages, the latter being in charge of a messenger and it was in that capacity I served till the fall of 1872.

From Alexandria, the stage route went northwest past Fisher's Landing on Red Lake River to the Red River of the North, which was crossed by ferryboat near the present site of Grand Forks; north from there on the west side of the Red River to Pembina, where the customs officers of both Canada and the United States were stationed. North of Pembina, the trail crossed to the east side again and continued about seventy-five miles north to Fort Garry, now called Winnipeg.

This post had been built first in 1806 and was then called Fort Gibraltar, but it was destroyed by fire ten years later and was not rebuilt till 1822, at which time it was renamed Fort Garry. In 1835, the log stockade was replaced with stone walls which surrounded the barracks when I first saw it. These walls, three feet thick and twelve feet high, enclosed a plot two hundred feet by two hundred eighty feet in area. The gate had been rebuilt in 1850 and is still standing in the heart of the city in memory of the early history in which it played a part. In 1871, when I first saw it, Fort Garry was a small town,

built around the military post and had about four hundred people, mostly half-breeds, living in log houses with dirt roofs and Indian tepees.

Trapping and trading for furs provided them with a living and took up the time they were not annoying the British Government. Before the stage line was established, these furs had been sent by small boats down the Red River to Lake Winnipeg, through this lake to the Nelson River, and down the Nelson to York Factory on Hudson Bay, where they were put on board ship for Europe. After the Hudson's Bay Company had sold out to Great Britain in 1869, there were no restrictions on the fur trade and the furs could be sold wherever the trappers pleased.

St. Paul was the nearest market, and in the spring the trappers, mostly Indians and half-breeds, gathered into caravans and loaded their furs onto "Red River carts." These carts were very rude affairs, made entirely of wood and rawhide which also was used for harness. Two poles formed the shafts and were laid on the axle to which crude wooden wheels were attached. Hung between the shafts were hides, forming the bed on which the furs were piled, and another hide was drawn over the furs for protection. Every man was accompanied by his family, which consisted of his wife, children, and several dogs. Often a family had more than one cart, and a caravan, made up of from one hundred to three hundred carts, extended some distance along the trail. No grease was used on the axles and each cart had a different squeak,

the caravan, when moving, making a noise that could be heard for miles.

Two or three months were required to make the trip to St. Paul and back, for they traveled slowly, hunting and fishing along the way and letting the horses rest. Their animals were called the "Red River horse" and were larger and of much better grade than the ponies of the plains Indians to the west and south.

After the stage lines were established, most of the furs were bought in Fort Garry and sent by express to St. Paul.

The stage company furnished their men with coats and leggings made from buffalo skins and caps of muskrat or coonskin. Under the fur coats, we wore buckskin suits and silk and wool underwear, with silk gloves and hose under our woolen ones, for the temperature was often forty degrees below zero and sometimes as low as fifty. It was fortunate for us that the company provided the fur coats, for we often took advantage of the low prices of clothing in Canada. We could bring the clothing we were wearing into the United States without paying duty, so we went into Canada with as little clothing as the climate would permit, in order to wear out all the clothes we could put on and still move around. These could be sold in Minneapolis or St. Paul at a good profit.

The messengers made the entire stage trip from Alexandria, so we lay over several days in Fort Garry and I often had the opportunity to buy furs which I sold to dealers in St. Paul. This led to another trip into the

North, for I was commissioned in 1873 by Ulmann, a leading furrier, to buy furs in the regions north of Fort Garry.

I went by boat down the Red River to Lake Winnipeg and on to the Nelson River, as I have described earlier in telling the route of the furs before the location of the stage lines. This is a low, flat country, dreary and desolate. The Red River, rising nearly a thousand miles farther south, thaws much earlier than the Nelson, and the ice, breaking up without thawing, is piled into gorges which dam up the water, causing it to leave the usual bed of the river and spread over the country on either side. In the spring, the Nelson is from twenty to thirty miles wide in places.

Along this route from Garry to Hudson Bay were located traders who kept supplies of goods such as blankets, underwear, heavy clothing of all kinds, camping equipment such as camp kettles, Dutch ovens, knives, ammunition, traps for every animal, and lines and hooks for fishing. The stock of groceries contained salt, pepper, sugar, bacon, coffee, tea, flour, baking powder, beans, and dried apples. There was usually a small stock of simple medicines. These goods were exchanged for furs which were shipped out and traded again in some city for more goods.

Instead of goods, I carried letters of credit with authority to write checks for Mr. Ulmann and could buy the furs much cheaper than by trading for them. At some posts, I found that the trader had a lot of furs on hand, but at others I waited a week or two and perhaps a month,

while runners went out with the word that a fur buyer had arrived. Within a few days, the trappers began arriving on foot or by boat, with their furs thoroughly dried and ready for shipment. These I made into bales and left in charge of the trader to be shipped south on the first boat going up the river, while I went on to the next post. Most of the skins were from mink, otter, and beaver with some lynx and fox, occasionally a silver fox, although this fur did not have the market value then it has to-day.

I had spent the entire spring and summer at various trading posts between Fort Garry and York Factory, which I reached about the first of August, and by the time I was ready to leave this post, nearly a month later, the weather was becoming cold and stormy. To return to the States for the winter would have meant a month of hard traveling which I feared to undertake at that season, as I might have found the rivers and Lake Winnipeg closed by ice and all the boats laid up. Often navigation on the Nelson closed in September and I chose to stay in York rather than undertake the long trip out that fall and back again in the spring.

Although York was one of the most important posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, being the transfer point between the river and the ocean travel, it was made up of only a few buildings of logs, chinked with mud and covered with dirt roofs. Unlike Fort Garry, York and the other northern fort of the fur company were peopled by Scotch and Scotch half-breeds, of whom not more than fifty lived there the year round, although in the spring

the majority of the trappers of the West Hudson's Bay Company brought in their winter's catch of furs and spent the summer around the post.

From about the middle of May till September 1st, the weather had been delightful, although during the day one was annoyed a great deal by the flies and at night by the mosquitoes when traveling along the rivers and lakes. But at York and on the bay coast the sea breeze drove away these pests. The banks of the streams were heavily wooded and there was a profusion of wild flowers, and I wondered why the inhabitants of the posts did not raise vegetables, as they could easily have done, instead of living on canned and dried foods and meat.

It had been a pleasant summer for me as well as profitable to both Mr. Ulmann and myself. I had spent nearly five thousand dollars for furs and had been well received by the trappers and fur traders, as it was a new thing to have a buyer come into the territory and pay cash for their furs, so I could get them for about my own price. I was paid seventy-five dollars a month and my expenses—an unusual salary for those days, although the expense amounted to very little, for every traveler carried his own bed which he rolled down on the floor or the deck of the boat when he was on the water. It was a custom of the country for every man to share his meal with a stranger, especially if they had any business dealing, and I found the traders, as is usual with the Scotch people, most hospitable and entertaining.

After I made up my mind to stay at York that winter,

I joined a party of trappers who were going farther north. Six of us made up the party, but this time our provisions were not carried on pack horses, as on my other trips in the States. For this trip, our equipment was loaded into two small boats called yawls, which would carry from fifteen hundred to two thousand pounds each. These had small sails which we used when the wind was in the right direction, but otherwise we had to row, and by this means we followed the coast about two hundred miles north to Fort Churchill, another Hudson's Bay post very much like York, but having more military appearance and less business and trading. At Fort Churchill were stationed a number of men who did police duty, carried the mail, and in general represented the Canadian government. They were much like the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, but these men did most of their traveling in the summertime in canoes, but using dogs in the winter. Leaving the post, we followed up the Churchill River nearly two hundred miles, where we made two camps and divided the provisions and work.

Not having horses as Tennis and I had in Colorado to haul the logs, we had to use smaller timber for building the shacks, which were chinked with mud and moss and had dirt roofs. These camps were more rude than the others I had helped to build, but were very comfortable, although the temperature was often fifty degrees below zero and the snow was very deep. But we did not have the blizzards and snowstorms that occur farther south and in the mountains.

Fur animals were numerous. We had out about twenty traps apiece—a good day's work for a man to visit. The most valuable fur was otter, but we caught many mink, beaver, foxes, and white weasels.

Altogether the winter was uneventful except for the death of one of our men named McCrosty, but I was becoming accustomed to these tragedies and burying men far away from their homes and without religious rites, for this was the third time it had occurred in my party.

The winter broke early, and in April we took our furs back to York, where I found a boat ready to leave for Fort Garry; and from there I went at once to St. Paul. I settled up my business matters with Mr. Ulmann and this winter on Hudson Bay closed forever my experiences as a trapper.

CHAPTER V

WITH CUSTER INTO THE BLACK HILLS

It was early summer when I returned to St. Paul, and after closing the business connected with my Hudson Bay trip I spent some time renewing acquaintance with the city and with my friends there. During this time I met General George A. Custer, who was planning to take an expedition to explore the Bighorn and Yellowstone country—the country I had traversed with De Rocheau, after leaving Jim Bridger, four years before. Custer was impressed with my knowledge of the country and wanted me to go out with him as a guide.

But he would not start for some time, so I arranged to meet him at Fort Abraham Lincoln where the expedition would be made up, and I departed for Yankton to visit a brother, W. R. Sutley, who had located there a year or two earlier. Upon receiving word from the general, I went up the Missouri to meet him at the fort according to our previous arrangement.

A number of the Sioux had been dissatisfied since the Red Cloud Treaty in 1868 and several of the leaders were becoming restless. In the event of trouble, it was thought the Indians would take refuge in the Big Horn Mountains and the Black Hills, and the military commanders wanted more detailed information about these regions.

The expedition was large enough to discourage any Indian attack. Custer had ten companies of the Seventh Cavalry and two companies of infantry, besides guides, interpreters, teamsters, and Ree scouts, in all about one thousand men. There were probably over one hundred wagons with four mules to a wagon and six or eight ambulances each drawn by four mules. These ambulances were really light wagons with canvas covers, having curtains which could be rolled up on the sides. They had a driver's seat in front of the covered section and two seats inside facing each other. Around the military posts, such carriages were used by the officers traveling from one post to another or on any trip when they did not care to ride horseback. On this trip, there was a horse for all, but I usually rode in an ambulance with Custer or other officers.

In addition to the soldiers, guides, and scouts, several scientists and a photographer accompanied the party. We had some big guns also.

The discovery of gold in the Pike's Peak country had led to prospecting all through the mountains and had built up settlements in Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming. Prospectors had looked longingly to the Black Hills, in acknowledged Indian country, and some mining parties had been turned back from the hills by soldiers. Perhaps the War Department realized that the next Indian trouble was apt to come over the white invasion of the hills and was preparing for it by becoming familiar with that region.

The direct course to the Black Hills from Fort Lincoln was more than two hundred miles, but through a dry and treeless country, so it was not considered. Leaving on July 2nd we traveled in a southwesterly direction to the bend of the Big Heart River, and on across the north and the south forks of the Cannon Ball, which gets its name from the rounded boulders, resembling cannon balls, that are found in its valley. Our course bore to the westward, and, reaching the north fork of the Grand River, we went up this stream a day or two before striking off to the southwest to explore a cave on the eastern side of a high ridge covered with pine.

We had been annoyed for several days by immense numbers of grasshoppers, and before reaching the ridge we had a hard uphill march over a dry and cactus-covered region. The sandstone cap of the ridge had been worn by the weather to resemble the ruined towers of an old fortified city. The cave was a hole washed out of the sandstone, running back perhaps two hundred feet and regarded with awe by the superstitious Indians.

Continuing southwest, we crossed the south fork of the Grand and then through a dry and rough country till we reached the valley of the Little Missouri. Here we spent several days in camp, resting and cleaning up, for we had traveled more than two hundred miles from the fort. From the hills between which lay our camp we could see Slim Buttes off to the southeast, and directly south of us the Black Hills, high and dark with some separate peaks standing out. Before reaching the Lit-

tle Missouri, the geologists had found some fossils, indicating that the region had once been covered with water.

Leaving the Little Missouri country, the expedition moved south, and, crossing the Belle Fourche, or north fork of the Cheyenne, were soon in the hills, an entirely different country than that through which we had been passing. Now we found grassy prairie with oak and pine scattered over it. The temperature was cooler as we penetrated the hilly country. The air was fresh and clean, the grass heavy, and everywhere there was an abundance of wild flowers and fruit. Springs of cold water were easily found, although many of the streams gave evidence of minerals.

Reaching the Red Water, we went up this stream a few miles to avoid a high peak which loomed to the south and struck a well-marked Indian trail to the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail agencies. A day or two later, we entered a beautiful valley which Custer named Floral Valley from its profusion of wild flowers, and here we found another trail which the Indian guides said led from the hostile camps on the Tongue River to the agencies. Along this trail we found many old camps and lodge poles.

The hills were covered with pine, aspen, and spruce, and signs of deer and bear were plainly seen. Crossing the divide, we followed down the valley of another stream to the southeast and here the first Indians were encountered. A village was peacefully preparing winter food,

the men away on a hunt while the women in camp were cooking and drying meat. The head man of the camp was One Stab, a son-in-law of Red Cloud.

From this camp, we got the first clear view of Harney Peak, and because of the resemblance of the limestone ridges to fortresses, this was called Castle Valley. The country was explored in every direction and a few days later we moved on to French Creek. We camped there several days and a party climbed Harney Peak, from which, White River, away to the southeast, and Bear Butte, to the north, could be seen. Other peaks in the group were named for General Terry and General Custer. Without moving the camp farther south, scouting parties were sent out to cover the country between us and the Cheyenne River, one going south and one going east along the creek.

Since we first entered the hills, a diligent search for gold had been carried on and the efforts were redoubled by the men left in camp while the scouting parties were out. A little gold had been found at several places, but on French Creek some fair-sized nuggets were washed out and the miners were certain they could find plenty of gold if they could reach bedrock. The gold caused very little excitement in our camp, nor did we realize for a moment what the effect would be, when the report of our discovery was made known. The whole region was in the Indian Reservation and the Hills were jealously guarded by the Sioux, so that no prospecting had been permitted, and so far as was generally known the discovery made by

Custer's party was the first time gold had actually been located there by white men.

We had been on the trail fully a month and General Custer now decided to explore the eastern side of the Hills with the idea of finding a route to come out somewhere near Bear Butte. The last part of the trail was retraced, but before Castle Creek was reached, a thunderstorm during the night gave me a new and thrilling experience. My other trips into the mountains had been in the wintertime and nothing so disturbing as a thunderstorm had occurred. Instead of being over us, the thunder and lightning were all around us, and it seemed impossible that the camp would not be destroyed. Echoes rolled among the farther hills and the pouring rain almost obliterated the trail. Keeping to the north and east, the march led across several creeks flowing to the Cheyenne, and along the way deer and bear were killed. Many beaver dams were found and breaks in the hills gave glimpses of the prairie beyond. It seemed remarkable that, whatever direction we chose to go, a valley could always be found to afford a trail.

About the middle of August, camp was made on Bear Butte Creek, six or seven miles south of the peak, and here we reloaded for the return across the prairies. Bear Butte, which is a landmark for the entire region, standing alone some distance from the foothills, rises about twelve hundred feet above the creek, and from its four thousand feet above sea level most of the peaks of the Hills are visible. The name comes from its peculiar for-

mation—a bare, slender peak reaching about eight hundred feet above the surrounding prairie and through the timber at its base.

Our course led to the north, on the east side of Bear Butte, and after crossing the Belle Fourche, we met some Cheyenne Indians returning from Tongue River, who informed us that Sitting Bull with five thousand braves was planning to intercept us.

The country was in marked contrast to the beauty of the Hills, for here it was dry and cracked, covered with sagebrush and weeds but little grass. We had difficulty at some camps to find wood and even the larger streams were nearly dry. The Bad Lands offered serious obstruction, and we turned northeast to camp at the head of Grand River, north of the Cave Hills, and then toward the Little Missouri over a prairie which the Indians had burned to hinder us. But we had seen nothing of Sitting Bull or any war party.

The burned prairie lay north of us, black as far as we could see, so we turned west to the Bad Lands and found good camping places, following the valley of the Little Missouri, nearly to the big bend. The bare clay hills of the Bad Lands were beautiful and interesting, crowded together into weird and comical shapes, banded by horizontal stripes of black, brown, red, gray, and white. In the ravines, we found wood, water, grass, and deer, so we fared well in that vicinity, but turned northeast, crossing a burned prairie to the head of the Knife River and gradually moving out of the burned area over a rolling

prairie to Fort Lincoln, which we reached on August 30th.

It had been Custer's plan to proceed into the Yellowstone country after exploring the Hills, but the orders to do so did not come as he was expecting before he left the Little Missouri country, and so the particular guiding which I had been hired to do was not needed. Consequently, I had enjoyed an interesting trip into a new and picturesque country with no expense to me and good pay besides, and I had had the opportunity to become acquainted with one of the most popular men on the frontier at that time.

I have never met a finer man nor a braver one than General Custer. I have read that he was a hard drinker, but this was not so. I was with him all during the summer, for two months riding in the same coach and sleeping in the same tent, and though he had a gallon keg of whisky with him all the time, I am sure we drank not more than a pint of it. Two or three times, when we were wet and cold, he would say:

"Zack, would you like something out of the little keg?" And perhaps we took a drink, not always. So when I hear stories of his drunkenness and that he committed suicide when he was surrounded by Indians at the battle of the Little Big Horn, it makes me angry that such lies should be published fifty years after his death. General Custer would have fought the whole Sioux nation alone, though all his men lay dead around him, before he would have committed suicide.

Until the Custer expedition, little was known about the

Black Hills, although General Harney had made a trip in 1852 from old Fort Pierre where he was in command of the garrison. As one approaches from the east, while still fifty or sixty miles away, a dark streak appears, extending about a hundred miles north and south, and as one goes nearer the hills assume form out of this dark, low-lying cloud.

While they have been named the Black Hills, they are really mountains, for some of them, like Harney Peak, are seven thousand feet high. The Rockies are more magnificent and lofty, but I do not think their beauty can compare with that of the Black Hills. The Hills are covered with grass and trees, mostly pine, which, when seen from a distance, gives them the dark color from which they have been named. Clear, sparkling streams rush down the valleys and fish are abundant, while many varieties of wild flowers and fruit bloom along the banks. Frequently, one sees open valleys, called parks, where deer and elk may be seen feeding or bounding away for shelter, and back from the main routes of travel are black bears and mountain lions. Buffalo, wolves, and other wild animals abound, but are seldom seen unless one leaves the highways to hunt for them.

Near Spearfish in the northern part is the canyon of Spearfish Creek, where thousands of visitors go during the year, and in the southern part are the Hot Springs around which have been built bathhouses, fine hotels, and places of amusement. Near the springs is Wind Cave, much of which is still unexplored, but the easily reached

chambers rival those of the famous Mammoth Cave, while guides report far greater beauty in the more remote caverns.

I shall never forget the day that General Custer with a small party went up Lookout Mountain and looked off to the east as far as eye could see at the Bad Lands. It was in the early morning and there was a mirage. It was the most beautiful sight I have ever seen. A great city with towers and spires seemed to float along just above the horizon, while the rising sun painted the lower hills at our feet in rose and gold and purple—the valleys between filled with low clouds or mist.

The climate of the Black Hills is as attractive as the scenery, for though the days may be warm, the air is light and there is very little wind. At night, the air is cool and one needs blankets to be comfortable while sleeping. I have visited nearly every part of the United States and many places in Canada, but the Black Hills is the beauty spot of them all and is an ideal location for a summer trip or a vacation.

When it became known that Custer's party had located gold in the Black Hills, prospectors rushed in from Colorado, Wyoming, and Nebraska and various mining camps in the West. The summer of 1875 found many miners at work along the streams in spite of the efforts of the soldiers to prevent such an invasion. By a treaty with the United States in 1868, the Sioux had given up claim to most of their lands except what was afterwards known as the Great Sioux Reservation, lying west of the Missouri

River and including the Black Hills country which was really the last hunting ground of the Sioux.

The Indians had sufficient cause for dissatisfaction with the treatment and rations which they were receiving from their agents, and this invasion of gold miners alarmed many of the chiefs who went on the warpath to protect their hunting grounds, and in this I think they were entirely justified. Bands left the different agencies and went into Wyoming and Montana where buffalo and other game was still plentiful, and the soldiers were sent out to bring them in.

In the spring of 1876, General Custer wrote me from Washington, asking me to go with him on such an expedition into the region over which I had expected to guide his party two years before, but I had been engaged by Colonel Witcher of Sioux City to take his bull outfit from Fort Pierre into the Hills, so I could not go with Custer. This was the campaign that ended so tragically on the Little Big Horn, and I have sometimes thought there might have been a different ending if he had had some old frontiersmen like Kit Carson, Jim Bridger, Buffalo Bill, or even myself as his guides. I have been over this ground twice, once before the battle and once since, and I have talked with many of the Indians who were camped on the Big Horn on June 25, 1876, Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Gall, Crow King, and others. For years after the tragedy, it was difficult to get from the Indians who were there any correct account of what actually took place, as they were afraid of the punishment the

government might inflict should they tell of taking part in it.

The Sioux, according to their own story, were camped along the west bank of the Little Big Horn, the village extending several miles and not arranged for an attack. There were between ten and twelve thousand Indians, of which four thousand were warriors from several tribes—Unkpapas, Blackfeet, Ogallalas, Cheyennes, Tetons, with Sitting Bull at the head of the council and Gall in command of the braves. Custer must have been misinformed as to their strength, although he had such pride in the Seventh Cavalry I doubt if he would imagine any Indian force being too much for them. Back of the camp, on the west side of the river, were steep bluffs which prevented any movement in that direction; some fifteen or twenty miles north, on the Yellowstone, General Terry and his soldiers cut off any escape down the valley; east of the camp two ravines led out to the prairie.

Discovering a well-marked trail, showing that a large band of Indians was camped along the river, Custer divided his men, himself remaining about two miles east of the camp while Reno and Bentine moved on west to the river which they followed north, coming in behind the Sioux and surprising them to such an extent that the camp was thrown into confusion as the bullets rattled through the lodge poles. The soldiers could have won the skirmish if they had followed up their advantage, but Gall galloped from the lower end of the village and took command. After the Indians attacked, Reno and Bentine fell

back across the river and took possession of a hill where they remained, having lost about forty men.

About this time the Indians discovered Custer's force moving west toward the lower end of the camp, following the ridge between the two ravines. Gall had been aware of Custer's approach since early morning and was ready for an attack, for he knew he had a superior force, but there was no well-planned ambuscade of Custer's men. The Indians thus cornered had to fight their way out and were quick to realize the advantage which Custer's movement had given them. While the warriors at the upper village kept Bentine and Reno engaged, those in the center turned east up the ravine south of Custer and came in behind him. Warriors from the lower camp rode up the north ravine and fell on Custer's force from the right and another band attacked him in front, so he was completely surrounded. The cavalry mounts were of no use in this close fighting and were soon stampeded, leaving the soldiers at the mercy of the Sioux, and let me tell you, no men will fight harder or fiercer than Indians when the lives of their wives and children are at stake.

I have known the warriors to ride among their enemies and hamstring the horses and with their knives let the entrails out of the horses and men, too, if they could reach them.

After Custer was surrounded, the fighting lasted but a short time, perhaps not over thirty minutes, and the few brave men who gathered around "Long Hair" were

quickly overpowered, Custer himself being among the last to fall.

The Indians said that no warriors opposed Reno's men for fully an hour during the engagement with Custer, but they returned in the evening and the soldiers were subjected to further attack. The Sioux were too excited over their victory of the afternoon to miss the feasting and dancing which entertained the village that night and delayed attacking the force they were besieging on the hill.

In the morning, Gall's scouts brought in word that the walking soldiers (infantry) were coming and consternation spread through the camp, for they were more feared by the Sioux than the cavalry. The Indians broke camp about noon but without any disorder, though there was difference of opinion among the chiefs about attacking Reno's men. The Indians had lost twenty-two men, and carried the bodies away with them to keep their dead from falling into the hands of the Crow and Shoshone scouts.

Within a few days, they had separated into small bands which scattered over the country, many slipping back in fear to their agencies. A few escaped with Sitting Bull into Canada. But the greater number were pursued by the soldiers till, starved into submission, they surrendered.

CHAPTER VI

THE TEXAS TRAIL

AFTER my summer with General Custer, I returned to Yankton to see my brother, but in a few days was on the way to Wisconsin to hunt, after which I meant to go on home to Pennsylvania to stay.

While in Wisconsin, I was boarding with a family with whom the local teacher was staying, but the big boys of the school had become so unruly that she had decided to give it up. Our host was a member of the school board and he induced me to teach out the rest of the term—about four months.

He and I went to interview the county superintendent and I passed the required examination, which I suspect was based on my muscular rather than on my mental attainments. I was at the schoolhouse on the following Monday morning with a warm room and some surprise for the children when they arrived and saw the new teacher. In due time the "bad boys" came in, and, after kicking the snow off their boots and setting their guns in the corner with much more noise than was necessary, they stood around the stove, grinning and waiting to see what I would do.

"Well, boys," I said, after they had had time to get warmed, "you had better take your seats now. I want to call the school to order."

They looked at each other knowingly and at the other pupils to see if they were being observed.

"I guess we know when we're ready to go to our seats," replied the oldest of the three.

Whereupon I grabbed him by the seat of his pants and his coat collar before he had time to even look surprised and started toward his seat, which the other children had earlier pointed out to me, while he grabbed at the desks as he was dragged down the aisle. By the time we reached his seat all the other pupils were in theirs, and this little incident settled the bad boys and brought the whole school under discipline. These older boys and I became good friends and often spent Saturdays hunting together, for I became something of a hero after they learned of my travels and the famous men I had known on the frontier.

But my trip to Pennsylvania had been delayed till I heard again the call of the prairie with the approach of spring. So after school was out, I went on a lumber fleet, floating down the Wisconsin River into the Mississippi and down to Dubuque. Here I left the fleet and went to Omaha, intending to return to Yankton and go out for the summer with a surveyor.

In Omaha, I met a man who worked for Billy Paxton, then one of the biggest cattlemen in the Northwest. Paxton had a contract to deliver cattle to the government at the various Indian agencies in Dakota Territory, where they would be issued to the Indians, and he engaged me to receive the cattle from the Texas herders and weigh them in at the agencies.

I went at once to Yankton, where Paxton had wintered a herd of saddle horses, and, taking Frank Aldrich with me, struck out for Ogallala, Nebraska, about four hundred miles to the southwest, at which place the cattle were to be delivered to me, as that was the end of the Texas trail. Aldrich and I each had a pack horse, besides the ones we rode, to carry our provisions and camp outfit, for we camped along the way, picking out a trail where we could find camp places and water for the cattle when we returned.

Finding at Ogallala that the cattle had not come and that no information could be given as to when they would arrive, Aldrich and I went on south, expecting every day to meet the herd coming up. We rode down through southern Nebraska and across Kansas and still heard nothing about our cattle, though we realized by that time that there had been some misunderstanding as to the time of their delivery.

The weather was warm and it was pleasant to be riding again over the rolling prairies in the warm spring air. Often we found lodging at some ranch house, for we were following a well-marked cattle trail over which thousands of cattle had traveled north to feed the Indians and the soldiers after the buffalo had been slaughtered. We crossed the same country over which I had hunted with Tennis and Buffalo Bill in 1867, but the railroad had worked many changes, driving out the Indians and the buffalo and bringing in settlers and ranchmen. Sometimes we met cattle outfits and enjoyed their hospitality while

telling them of the trail over which we had come and getting directions from the cowboys for our further invasion of the southern ranges. But many times we camped alone beside some stream and rolled up in our blankets at night, to drift off to sleep with a lone coyote calling from some near-by hill to his mates farther away.

And still the cattle did not come and we drifted on south across Indian Territory and into Texas as I had been hoping we would do after we had not met the herd in Kansas. I wanted to see Texas "longhorns" and Texas cowboys on their own range, and for once I had my wants gratified, for we rode almost across Texas before we found the cattle at Cuero, a few miles north of Matagorda Bay.

For some reason, they had not started north as Paxton had expected, and Aldrich and I helped round them up in Jackson and Matagorda counties in southern Texas, where we got the seven thousand head of "longhorns," many coming from the famous Le Ward Ranch. Then came the long drive north over the old Chisholm Trail, which was well known in those days but is now only a memory, and crossing the Red River we struck northwest to Ogallala.

We started with about fifteen wagons to carry the bed rolls, provisions, and camp equipment, and a hundred head of horses for the thirty riders. It took ten or twelve men to keep the herd moving and we traveled about ten to fifteen miles a day. The same number of herders were needed to hold the cattle at night, for seven thousand

head of longhorns were about as easy to herd as the same number of buffalo would have been. During the day, an old line rider rode ahead and was followed by the loose saddle horses. The cattle followed these along the trail, spreading out into a "V" sometimes a mile wide and running back a mile or more to be pushed along by the herders and wagons, the whole outfit often being more than two miles long.

The cattle were bunched at night as close together as we could crowd them and the herders rode round and round, but if the herd were restless, as they usually were before a storm, all the men turned out to hold them and as they rode sang monotonous doggerel to soothe the bunch and keep them from milling. Besides quieting the cattle, this singing let each man know how far he was from the other riders and also kept coyotes, wolves, and other wild animals from coming near, which would have caused a stampede.

As simple as these songs were, they were often amusing and sometimes even pathetic, as they pictured the life the cowboys led—many times with its tragic ending far from their homes and friends, for a cowboy encountered many dangers from bad horses, a stampeding herd, or wild rides in the dark.

One song, which was popular with the Texas men, told of a hard-hearted judge who had sent a cowboy to the "Cuero jail" and of his trouble there. After a tale of woe and the wrongs he had to endure, it ends:

The grub they give you is meat and corn bread
As old as the devil and heavy as lead.
You eat it right up and fall down in your cell
Like angels from Heaven fall down into Hell.
It's hard times in the Cuero jail,
It's hard times, I say.

The bedding they give you is old dirty rugs
All torn to the devil and covered with bugs.
The bugs they all swear that you cannot give bail
So you have to get lousy in Cuero jail.
Oh, it's hard times in the Cuero jail.
It's hard times, I say.

Another cowboy song with no more sense, but a little more humor, gives the experiences of a tenderfoot, always a target for cowboy wit:

I started out to have some fun
And see how punchin' cows was done,
So when the round-up had begun,
I tackled the cattle king.

Said he, "My foreman's here in town.
He's over 'n the saloon, his name is Brown.
I think he'll take you on," said he,
And "I hope he does," said I.

We started for the ranch next day,
Brown talked to me most all the way.
Said he, "Cow punchin's just like play—
It ain't no work at all.

All you got to do is ride,
It's just like drifting with the tide."
But Jiminy Christmas how he lied,
He certainly had his gall.

They put me in charge of the "cavvy yard"
And told me not to work too hard,
That all I had to do was guard
The horses from getting away.

They saddled me up an old gray hack
With a bunch of "set-fast" on his back,
Then covered his head with a gunny sack
And told me to get on.

When I got on, he left the ground,
Went up in the air and turned around,
But I came down without a sound.
Oh, that was an awful fall.

They picked me up and carried me in
And rolled me out with a rolling pin.
"That is the way they all begin,
You're doing fine," said Brown.

"And if before morning, you don't die
We'll give you another horse to try."
"Oh, won't you let me walk?" said I.
"Yes, to town," said Brown.

And now, young man, take my advice,
And think my story over twice,
For the fun you get, it's an awful price,
You're better off in town.

Before you try it, go kiss your wife,
Put a heavy insurance on your life,
Then shoot yourself with a butcher knife,
For that is an easier way.

With such a bunch of cattle, fifteen miles a day was good traveling, for the cattle had to feed along the way and could not be driven too hard if they were to cover the whole distance. We pushed on, day after day, toward the end of the Texas trail, where the cattle would be turned over to Paxton's men. At night, the men who were not on herd gathered around the camp fire and told brave tales of earlier adventures with bad men, bad horses, Indians, or wild cattle.

Every outfit had one or two good singers who entertained the circle with ballads of the plains and trails. And I think such songs, with their record of everyday work and dangers, were the nearest to any inspiring or religious influence that some of these men ever had. The simple rhymed story of some comrade's death brought to our minds the ever present prospect of sudden death, far from our homes and loved ones, and made us realize our need for a Power greater than our own.

The songs which were sung around the camp fire were generally old home songs and showed more sentiment and more reflection of the cowboy's serious thoughts than the loose rhymes they sang to quiet the cattle. I can give no better example of such a song than "Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie," which was always a favorite with the men because, I suppose, each one of us could picture him-

self as the dying cowboy and the song expressed our own thoughts:

"Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie."
These words came low and mournfully
From the pallid lips of a youth who lay
On his dying bed at the close of day.

He had moaned in pain till o'er his brow
Death's shadows fast were gathering now.
He thought of home and his loved ones nigh,
As the cowboys gathered to see him die.

"It matters not, I've oft been told,
Where the body lies when the heart is cold,
But grant this one last wish to me
And bury me not on the lone prairie.

"Let my slumber be, where my mother's prayer
And my sister's tears will mingle there,
Where my friends may come and mourn for me.
Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie.

"Oh, bury me not—" And his voice failed there,
But we heeded not his dying prayer.
In a narrow grave, just six by three,
We buried him there on the lone prairie.

Where the dewdrops glow and the butterflies rest,
Where the wild flowers bloom on the coulee's crest,
Where the winds blow free and the coyotes roam,
We buried him far from his once loved home.

And the cowboys now as they roam the plain,
For we marked the spot where the boy was lain,
Lay a bunch of wild flowers on the grave,
With a prayer to Him who their souls will save.

At the end would come a short silence, often broken by a low whistle repeating the tune, then the boys would wander away to roll up in their blankets and look up at the stars, praying that they would not be buried on the lone prairie, for though we loved the prairie and were happy living and riding on it, none of us wanted to die and be buried there.

Aldrich and I had started south early in May, and it was October before we returned to Ogallala where the cattle were delivered to me. Till then the outfit had been in charge of the Texas foreman. Here I had the pleasure of renewing my acquaintance with Buffalo Bill, whom I had not seen since I left him in Kansas in 1867, and he was surprised to find me still in the West when he knew I had been planning to go home and finish school. Paxton's foreman looked over the herd, and, Cody helping, we counted out what we thought would be needed to fill the beef contracts. Then Aldrich and I started on north to the Missouri with the cattle, going northwest to a point on the North Platte where it could be crossed. We had had a good trip all the way from Texas with no serious trouble till we reached the Platte.

There had been a big rain in Wyoming a day or two before and the river was high. When the North Platte is up, or the water has been high, it is dangerous to cross because of the quicksand in which anything will mire down. A fine picture of crossing this river during high water is shown in "The Covered Wagon," and any one who has seen that portrayal will realize the conditions we

faced, better than I can describe them. Rather than take such chances, we lay there for ten days or longer, men and stock getting a good rest, which all needed after the long drive, but the men began to get restless from too little activity.

The night herders spent most of their afternoons gambling, Mexican Monte being popular with the Texas men, several of whom I had hired to finish the drive. Disputes were frequent, but one man named Cook was very disagreeable and was the cause of much of the trouble, so I decided to get rid of him as soon as I had a chance to send him to Sidney, the nearest town, for a cowboy was never fired when out on the prairie. One day a ranchman stopped in our camp on his way to Sidney to hire a man, and I suggested to Cook that he take the place, as it would give him work all winter, while our drive would soon be finished. I also recommended Cook to the ranchman, for he was a good man, but worked better alone than in an outfit. Cook and the ranchman rode away and I thought the trouble was ended.

But a few days later they returned, and as they rode into our camp, Cook, who had been drinking, began swearing at me and shooting at the wagons in some of which the night herders were still sleeping. I tried to stop him, but he turned on me and we ran around the wagons and among them, with him shooting whenever he caught sight of me and at my legs under the wagon beds. Finally, we came face to face and I proved quicker with my gun than he did, but it has been one of the regrets of my life that

I had to shoot him. I reported at once to the United States Commissioner at Sidney and he went out to the camp, where he questioned the men and then acquitted me of all blame.

Either Aldrich or I rode ahead of the herd after we left Ogallala, for we were the only ones in the outfit who had ever made the trip across Nebraska. At that time Nebraska had little settlement except along the Union Pacific and in the eastern part. The section we crossed had no county organization and no settlement except a few stockmen living along the streams, but was used for great herds of cattle, as the buffalo had all been killed off or driven farther west. On our ride down from Yankton in the spring, we had marked the trail and had picked out camping places for the return trip with the cattle, so we got along fine till we came to the Missouri River about four miles below the mouth of the Niobrara. Crossing this river was the real danger of the whole trip, for we could ford the Platte, but the cattle would have to swim the Missouri.

Leaving the camp in charge of Aldrich, I went across the river and got a man named Miller to bring his small bunch of tame cattle down to the river to coax ours across. Miller's cattle were to be held on the Dakota side till ours began to come out of the river and then driven back to his ranch to keep them from getting mixed with ours and having to be cut out. Although the plan worked well as far as getting the Texas cattle started into the water, Aldrich and his men were unable to hold the herd back after

the leaders had started across. Then two or three hundred cattle were in the river and the main herd were rushing in from the banks in spite of the men fighting to hold them back; the leaders turned back toward the bank and those behind climbed over them. Still several hundred were milling in the water.

Finally, the rush from the bank was stopped, and the cattle that had not been tramped under started swimming across or back to the herd. Many had been tramped and hurt and these came to the surface for several hundred feet down the stream, bawling and trying to reach the banks, but only a few staggered out. The second attempt turned out better, for we were able to keep them from rushing in, but when they were delivered to the various agencies, we found we were short about four hundred head, the cattle which had drowned.

The carcasses were strewn along the banks for miles, many lying in the water till spring, when the warm weather caused them to rise to the surface and they floated down the river even as far as Sioux City and Omaha. Though we were sorry to see the cattle helpless and drowning, they were not much loss financially, for the Texas cattle did not cost much except for the expense of the long drive to bring them north.

The cattle delivered to the various agents, I returned to Yankton where I found a good deal of stir and excitement over the discovery of gold in the Black Hills by prospectors during the previous summer. Many parties which had gone in and had been escorted out by the sol-

diers were returning to Yankton and Sioux City because of the lack of provisions, and their reports of gold finds were the beginning of the rush which followed in 1876. The Indians had been restless all during the summer and fall while their reservation had been trespassed upon and the whole Missouri River country was waiting in suspense for the government to take some action.

I had come out West for a season of adventure and to hunt buffalo, fully expecting to return in the fall of 1867 and continue my studies. But one trip had led to another farther into the frontier and my return had been postponed from fall till spring and from spring till fall until eight years had rolled by. But I was tired of the West and the hardships I had encountered in my roaming from the Gulf of Mexico to Hudson Bay and I returned to Pennsylvania to stay.

CHAPTER VII

WILD DAYS IN DEADWOOD

THE winter of 1875-76 I spent with my parents near Oil City, but I had not been there long before I realized that I could never be satisfied to spend my life among those familiar scenes. I was spoiled for living in what seemed to me such narrow confines, and with the coming of spring I longed for the open prairie and the outdoor life. The Black Hills gold discovery was the talk of the country, as the Alaska fields were in the '90's, and proved too much an attraction for me to miss. So along in April I again started for the West, where I was to find that the next six or eight years were to be the most stirring of my life. Although I already had had experiences such as came to few men even in that day, I was to find that my frontier life had just begun and the year 1876 would bring me into more danger and adventure than I had yet seen.

In Sioux City, I met Colonel Witcher, an old freighter who had gone to Idaho during earlier gold strikes and had been in the Hills the previous summer when all the miners had been driven out. Witcher put me in charge of his bull outfit, which had wintered at Fort Pierre and was waiting there for freight to go up the river to be hauled to the Hills by bull or mule teams.

My brother in Yankton had the letter for me from

General Custer, asking me to go out with him as a guide into the Yellowstone country. The trouble with the Indians which had been threatening had come. The Sioux were leaving their agencies and gathering in the Big Horn country and the soldiers had been sent out to bring them in. It may have been my good luck that I could not go, for it was on this campaign that Custer and more than three hundred of his men were killed.

Witcher took me and his "bullwhackers," as the drivers were called, on the first boat to go up the river that spring to Fort Pierre, where we got the outfit together, loaded up, and started for the Black Hills. He had seventy yoke of cattle and twenty wagons on which we loaded about seventy-five tons of freight, mostly clothing and provisions. There were perhaps twenty-five men altogether, but some of them were not employed by Witcher and had joined our party for protection from the Indians, who were making a lot of trouble for the government and the prospectors who were trying to get into the Hills.

Our outfit hauled a five-pound brass cannon behind one wagon, so we were well prepared for an attack, but it was never used, for if there is anything an Indian fears it is a big gun. I suppose every Indian in Dakota soon knew that the Witcher outfit had a cannon with them and a number of old frontiersmen with Sharp's rifles, so we were not molested at all on our trips in and out of the Hills.

We had traveled about halfway and were near Grindstone Buttes, about eighty miles from Fort Pierre, when we met another outfit—a mule outfit owned by John Dil-

lon, who had made the trip from Yankton during the winter with freight, and was now coming out to get loads at Fort Pierre. Dillon told us he was afraid that four of his men had been killed or wounded by the Indians. The day before meeting us, he had sent these men back to Piñon Springs where he had had to leave a horse which had played out. They should have overtaken him by night but had not come.

The next day about noon, we came upon the wagon by the side of the road. Two men lay dead in the wagon, with the dead horse tied behind. About a hundred yards farther back, by the creek toward which he had evidently run for shelter, we found another body. The fourth man we found dead about a mile up the creek, where he had undoubtedly wandered trying to escape after being wounded. The mules and harness were gone, but the mules were recovered two years later in Montana.

Dillon had told us the names of these men, Sadler, Harrison, Gardner, and Billy St. Clare, who was called "Texas Jack." We dug a grave large enough for all four, then wrapped the bodies in canvas and buried them. Gardner's home was in Dubuque, and the next year his father came out to take the body back, but was afraid he could not identify it, and when he saw how we freighters had cared for the grave, he was satisfied to leave it there. I had helped to bury four more men in unknown graves. We called that run Deadmen's Creek, by which name it is still known.

We kept on along the trail, crossing the Cheyenne

River, till near the present location of Rapid City we found another man, killed by Indians. He was a minister from Watertown, Wisconsin, who had started from Fort Pierre with a number of men, but the company had turned out so rough he had left them to walk in to Rapid City, thinking he could make the trip during the night and not be discovered by the Indians. We buried him there, alone on the prairie—another unknown grave, as I thought. But his family came out after the danger from Indians was past and took the body back to Wisconsin.

A rough camp had been located on Rapid Creek and was a starting point for miners going out into different sections of the Hills. Reaching this camp, we found a number of men there who had come up from Nebraska with Jack Hale, who afterward became prominent in the political life of the territory and later when it became a state. Hale suggested that we locate a town site as it seemed likely to become a "live camp." We had it surveyed and platted by Fred Miers, and each man drew a block, making his selection in the order of the number he picked out of a hat. When the Black Hills was opened for settlement, the government recognized our claims and gave us title to the property.

I soon saw that Rapid City was not going to be one of the big camps, for very little gold was found near it and I sold my lots for a trifle. To-day it is a fine little city and one of the best business towns in South Dakota. In the summer of 1927, it had the distinction of being the summer capital or seat of government of the United States,

for President Coolidge made it his headquarters for about three months.

From Rapid City, we went on up into the Hills for forty-five miles, following the trail through valleys and over hills where the timber had to be cut out to make room to get the wagons through, till we came to Deadwood Gulch, so called from the dead timber standing on its steep sides and strewn along the creek at the bottom. Here the hill was so abrupt that we had to let each wagon down one at a time, with a yoke of oxen ahead to guide it while the men held it back with a cable fastened to the rear axle and run around a tree, letting the cable out as the wagon slipped down. When the cable had been let out to its full length, we held it till another could be run from the wagon to another tree farther down the hill. This was the most strenuous part of the trip, and it took us nearly all day to get the twenty wagons down, although the pitch was not more than one hundred and fifty feet long.

Two miles up the gulch was the camp of several thousand people. Crowded into this narrow, steep-sided ravine were men from all parts of the country and all walks of life—miners, freighters, merchants, doctors, lawyers, ministers, and gamblers—but only a few women and they were dance-hall girls.

All the buildings were of pine logs with no floors and few had any glass in the window openings. What lumber they had was whipsawed. A crib of logs was built and one log was rolled onto it to be sawed. One man stood under the log and pulled the big ripsaw down, while another

man stood above to pull it back. Several of this kind of sawmills had already been set up in the Hills, for they had to have some kind of boards to put floors in the dance halls, to make tables for gambling, benches in the saloons, and counters on which to dispose of the whisky and merchandise.

Few people around the camps did any work. The miners were out prospecting and spent their time working their claims, coming into town for supplies or to celebrate a new "find." The freighters made short stays, unloading their wagons as soon as possible and then back on the trail again after more goods. Occasionally, a miner was accompanied into the Hills by his wife, but she was seldom seen in camp, though a few started boarding houses and made money. Wild Bill Hickok was conspicuous among the gamblers and "Calamity Jane" was queen of the dance halls. Another well-known Western character, Madam Mustache, owned a gambling hall and was running a faro table. She had a heavy mustache and was bearded nearly like a man and was known in many mining camps. I had seen her in Denver in 1868. Deadwood Annie and Colorado Charley were other familiar citizens.

Calamity Jane was born of Mormon parents in Salt Lake City, but had run away with a freighter when she was a girl of fifteen, and from about 1865 until her death spent most of her life on the trail. I saw her first in Salt Lake in 1868. She came into town on an old Concord stagecoach, driving six horses, and many times she came into Deadwood the same way. When a bull train got into

camp, the first thing she would do was to get the bull whip with the longest lash and the biggest popper, and show the whackers how to crack it.

A bullwhacker's whip had a wooden stock about four feet long and an inch through with a lash from twenty to thirty feet long of braided leather, into which was plaited a buckskin popper about fifteen inches long by one inch wide. When he gave it a swing around his head and threw it out with a snap, the whip would crack like a shot from a gun. A driver had to have that kind of whip to handle eight or ten yoke of cattle and two or three wagons loaded with eight to ten tons of freight.

Perhaps few of the present generation ever saw a bull whip or a bull train. Oxen, as they are generally called, were called bulls by the freighters and a bull train generally consisted of about eighty to one hundred yoke of bulls with between twenty and thirty wagons. A fair-sized train was a hundred yoke of bulls and thirty wagons. A team was ten yoke and three wagons and such a train would move seventy-five to eighty tons of freight about fifteen miles a day. Besides the ten drivers or "whackers" there was a foreman, a cook, a night herder, and sometimes an extra man to help the cook and herd the cattle during the noon rest. The foreman usually rode horseback to get from one part of the train to another, as it was often strung along the trail for a mile or more.

In her younger days, Calamity Jane was a fine-looking woman when she dressed in woman's clothes, but she usually wore a buckskin suit, boots, and wide "cowboy"

hat and lived on the trail with a freight outfit between Deadwood and some point at which freight was loaded—Yankton, Fort Pierre, Bismarck, Sidney, or Cheyenne. Or she would go in with some fellow, get a couple of horses, and go out to some Indian reservation and steal a bunch of ponies, then run them into the Hills and sell them for any amount they would bring, say ten or fifteen dollars each, for the buyers knew they had been stolen. Then the buyers kept them hidden in the mountains so the soldiers could not find them.

When the Indians of the Cheyenne Agency gathered that spring to receive their rations from the government, they turned their ponies up the creek west of the agency to feed, for they stayed at the agency several days when they made such a trip. Calamity Jane and Tom Moore went out from Deadwood and rounded up about three hundred head, then ran them two hundred miles back into the Hills in two nights and a day. They sold the ponies and got away, and when General Crook came in after them he could not find fifty head.

As soon as we could get unloaded, we were starting back to Fort Pierre, and on the other trips I knew better than to take the whole outfit into Deadwood where provisions for men and cattle were so costly. Instead I left part of the wagons and bulls with men to care for them at some park outside where grass was good, returning to get them when the others had been unloaded.

Among the bullwhackers on the last trip I made into the Hills that summer was a young man who had been on

the frontier two or three years and he was a good driver. He was of medium size, weighing about one hundred sixty pounds, with black hair and swarthy complexion, though he had very little mustache or beard and seldom shaved. He looked like an Italian or Spaniard, though he said he had come from Kentucky and was called Jack McCall.

We had been in Deadwood a day or two, getting our freight unloaded to the different firms to which it was consigned, and the men who were not drunk were at work throughout the camp. I was checking off goods at Hildebrand's store when I heard a shot in the Bell-Union Theater, just across a narrow alley. I ran to the door of the dance hall, where I was met by all the men from the saloon, coming out in any way they could, crowding and climbing over each other. I looked inside. McCall stood swinging his revolver back and forth and telling them to clear the room. At one side and about halfway back at a card table, around which four men had been playing, sat Wild Bill, where he had pitched forward with his arms on the table, still holding his poker hand, but dead.

I had drawn my revolver as I ran, and, seeing McCall, I said, "Jack, what's the matter?"

"Don't shoot me, Zack," he cried, "he killed my brother."

Running out of the dance hall, he jumped onto a saddle horse standing in front, and, finding the horse was tied, Jack reached into his boot, drew a knife, and cut the rope, then galloped away up the creek.

Wild Bill had been shot in the back of the head, the bullet coming out through his cheek and entering the left arm of "Cap" Massey who sat on Bill's right. We picked him up and laid him on the floor, the cards falling from his grasp, and I saw the two black aces and black eights, the combination which since that day has been marked with the gambler's superstition as "The Dead Man's Hand." This was on August 2, 1876.

McCall had not gone very far when a shot from his pursuers broke the horse's leg and Jack was caught. He was brought back and given what they called a miners' trial which acquitted him. But this did not clear him, for only the United States officers had any authority on the Indian Reservation. The camp took up a collection, bought Jack a horse, and told him to get out of the Hills before Colorado Charley or some other friend of Bill's heard of the killing and "got him" for it. I told him to ride to Fort Pierre and sell his horse, then go back east to Maine or Massachusetts and live quietly in some small out-of-the-way town. But McCall thought the miners' trial had cleared him, so instead of going east he started for Cheyenne and, reaching Laramie, got drunk and began bragging about having killed the worst desperado in the West. He was picked up by the United States marshal and returned to Yankton for trial.

The sentiment in the Hills was pretty much with McCall, for Wild Bill did not have many friends in that camp. He was a big, powerful fellow, and more than a match, physically, for any ordinary man. It had become

Bill's way to shoot a man first and talk it over afterward, and he usually won in such a one-sided argument. Wild Bill was not the hero he has been pictured and Deadwood felt relieved over his removal.

All miners and other trespassers had been ordered to get out of the Black Hills and off the reservation by August 15th, but few left, and on that date General Crook began escorting all he could find to Laramie. Custer and his men had been killed in June and the whole Sioux nation was on the warpath. There was no freighting to be done into the Hills till the trouble with the Indians had been settled, so Witcher decided to take his bull train to Cheyenne and then on to Idaho. I did not care to go so far west and was going back to Yankton.

Jeff Cleveland had come into the Hills from Sioux City early in the spring with a running horse, and when General Crook ordered us all off the reservation, Cleveland was faced with the problem of caring for the horse. He offered me twenty-five dollars to take him to Fort Pierre and put him on the boat for Yankton, and as I wanted to get out of the Hills, this suited my own plans besides being good money for me—good money, that is, if I avoided the Indians and reached Fort Pierre. I thought I could do that, knowing the country as I did, by riding at night and sleeping during the day in timber along the creeks, where I could hide the horse and myself. Cleveland was afraid to make the trip, himself, for the Indians were bad along the trail to Fort Pierre.

The first day I rode to Rapid City, forty-five miles,

where I lay over two nights and a day. I got some oats for the horse on the trip and grub for myself. I still had my Sharp's rifle and the Colt's revolver I had got in Kansas City in 1867, so I got about a hundred rounds of ammunition. The most dangerous point on the trip was crossing the Cheyenne River and I was afraid the Indians would get me there if I tried it in the daytime. I planned to ride the forty-five miles to the Cheyenne the first day out of Rapid City and hide near by, then cross the river and ride to Piñon Springs, twenty miles farther, early the next morning and hide in the timber before daylight.

I started as soon as it was light enough to travel and rode to Washta Springs. "Washta" is the Sioux word for "good" and the good water at these springs made them a favorite camping place. Here I found a pilgrim outfit of seven wagons, sixteen horses, and about thirty men, women, and children, camped for dinner. The horses were all turned out to graze down the draw north of the springs, but one man was watching them. I asked if I could get some dinner and they said I could, so I took my horse down to the spring to drink and took off my saddle. I washed the horse's back and put the saddle on again, then went back to the camp, gave him some oats, and tied him to one of the wagons with a picket rope, to graze.

One of the men asked me why I had put the saddle on again and said I should have left it off for my horse's back to cool, but I told him there were too many Indians in the country for me to take any chances like that. They laughed at me and said they had come all the way from

Fort Pierre and had never seen an Indian, but I said that was the time I was most cautious, for one never saw Indians, when they were hostile, till they were upon a camp.

While we were eating, the herder came running in, yelling like a wild man:

"Injuns! Injuns! Injuns!"

He had been so scared he had left his rifle where he had sat, watching the horses. I grabbed my Sharp's and sent two or three shots after them before they got out of range. Three Indians had ridden in between the horses and the camp, taken the stock, and were making off toward Elk Creek, some seven or eight miles to the north.

I ran to my horse and slipped on the bridle, letting the picket rope drag, Indian fashion, and started after them. The campers begged me not to go and the women tried to hold me back, but I knew I had a better horse than the Indians and that they could not travel very fast with the farm horses they had taken from the campers, and I had a better gun. I rode off to the left of their trail and after a chase of two miles was near enough to shoot, but I had to get off my horse every time I got near enough to shoot, letting him run the length of the rope. When the Indians got out of range, I jumped on the horse and caught up with them again and began shooting. Two of them would start toward me while the third went off with the horses, then I would have to mount and ride away.

With my faster horse, I had circled around them far enough to keep them turned away from Elk Creek. My shots from the camp had broken one horse's leg and they

left him. Now they dropped another out of the bunch, and about the same time I saw one Indian fall from his pony, which ran on with the herd. One of the others rode to him, and, catching part of his clothing or his arm, dragged him along till the second rider caught the horse by the rope which the Indian always drags when riding. They threw the body across the pony and rode off, leaving the stolen horses.

I gathered them up and rode back to the horse which I had shot through the body and after shooting him with my Colt's, I went back to camp. The men there had killed the other wounded horse, but I had recovered fourteen head, unhurt.

We finished our dinner, but my horse was too tired for me to try to make the Cheyenne that night and I told them we had better all go to Box Elder Creek, about eight miles back toward Rapid, where there was timber for protection, but I did not expect any further trouble from that band of Indians after the reception I had given them. I think, however, that I was the only one in camp who slept any that night, as every time I woke up they were moving around. I told them never to let their horses loose without being hobbled. Had they been hobbled the day before, the Indians could not have taken them, for I could have shot them all before they could have taken the hobbles off and the horses could not have traveled with the hobbles on.

I recovered the horses on August 22, 1876. The next day the pilgrims reached Rapid City and stayed

there—their families being among the leading citizens to-day.

I went on to the Cheyenne, reaching the Five Mile Water Holes about five o'clock, where I stayed till after dark that night. Then I rode up the river about three miles from the usual crossing and found a place to cross, riding on to Piñon Springs, about twenty miles, where I cached my horse and slept all day.

After leaving the campers, I had made a camp fire only in the evenings, fried my bacon and made my coffee, filling a bottle to carry for noon the following day and drinking cold coffee for breakfast with my cold bacon and hard-tack. I would not risk a camp fire in the mornings when the smoke is so easily seen. My entire outfit, besides the saddle which I used for a pillow, was a slicker and a tin can for making coffee. My grub with the tin can was carried in the nose bag in which I fed the horse and I held my bacon on a stick over the camp fire, but this was luxury to what I had later.

The third night I rode fifty-five miles to Big Cottonwood Creek and again spent the day sleeping, but the fourth night I made forty-seven miles into Fort Pierre.

I had to wait a few days till a steamboat came down the river, then I took the horse to Yankton and left him there in a livery stable.

A day or two after my return, Deputy United States Marshal Ash returned from Wyoming with Jack McCall, who had been arrested there for killing Wild Bill. Along with most of the citizens, I went down to the depot to

meet the train and Jack was surprised to see me. The first thing he asked me was how I had got out of the Hills and to Yankton when the soldiers were taking men to Laramie. He seemed to be more interested in my ride to Fort Pierre than in his own troubles.

CHAPTER VIII

I MEET JESSE JAMES

I HAD thought I could go out from Yankton with a surveyor for the fall work, but there were more engineers there than were needed and I had no political "pull," for I was a Democrat, and between 1860 and 1880, in the North, a Democrat was looked on as almost a rebel against the United States.

There was nothing at Yankton for me to do unless I went to work on the steamboat and this I refused to do, so I went into Minnesota where I worked on a farm, near Northfield. I had been there not over two weeks when I received a letter from a friend, Ed Palmer, an engineer at Yankton, telling me that we had been given a contract up on the Northern Pacific Railroad and for me to go back to Yankton as soon as possible. There we would get our outfit together, teams, supplies, and men, and drive overland three hundred and fifty miles to the work. I explained the situation to Mr. McCullough, for whom I was working, and he said he would take me to Northfield that afternoon, in time to catch the train to St. Paul, where I would get a train for Sioux City and Yankton.

We reached Northfield about two o'clock and drove at once to the depot to leave my grips. The tracks were some distance from the main part of the town on the west side of the Cannon River, along which there was a ravine and

some timber. As we drove toward the river through this timber we heard shooting, and coming in sight of the bridge, we saw five or six men galloping across, some horses carrying two men. McCullough said they were some drunken fellows who lived over west by Dundas and always made trouble when they got to town. We pulled to the side of the road to let them pass and they rode by without molesting us.

But on reaching the town, what did we see?—two horses and one man lay dead in the street beside the bank. Heywood, the cashier, had been killed, and another man, the teller or bookkeeper, had been shot through the shoulder. The man in the street I recognized as one who had been in Yankton in the spring, just before I had started for the Black Hills. He had boarded at the Bradley Hotel and had talked of going to Deadwood with us. He went by the name of Clel Miller and was notorious in Minnesota for horse stealing. It was he who had piloted the robbers into Northfield and I have always thought he was in Yankton to look over the situation there, for in the spring about the time the ice broke up and the river boats began work, there was always a lot of money in the banks. But it seems that the outlaws had been afraid to tackle Yankton, as the town was full of men on their way to the Hills and all heavily armed.

The bank had been held up by the James and Younger gang, and years afterward Frank James told me of the shooting and of their escape. Three men had gone into the bank, but the cashier had swung the safe door shut and

was killed, while the other man had started to run out the back door and was shot through the shoulder. But if he knew, James would never tell me who had gone into the bank although he claimed that he had not been off his horse. He said they could not locate the shots that were being fired at them and had to leave without getting any money.

The truth is that two men were shooting at them from different places. Young Wheeler, a student at the college, was in his room over a store, about a half block from the bank, and when the robbers rode into town and began shooting to scare the people off the streets, he raised the window and shot at them from behind the curtains, killing one man and the two horses which we found in the street. By this time, other shots were coming from down by the river, so without waiting to open the safe, the robbers ran out and rode away, taking the one man that Wheeler had wounded.

Dr. Wheeler, the student who did the shooting, practiced medicine for many years in Grand Forks, North Dakota. He and I have talked over the attempted robbery a number of times, and from the description I gave him of Frank James, Wheeler says he was one of the men in the street.

James admitted that Wheeler was a good shot and would have got them all, if they had not left when they did. After carrying the wounded man, who was one of the Younger brothers, till they met a man driving to town, the gang took a horse from the farmer and rode west

through the heavy timber. But they did not make good time, because Clel Miller, who had been their guide, had been killed. The wounded man further hindered their flight, for the Younger boys refused to leave their mother, so the James boys left them and got away, but the three Youngers were captured near Mankato.

I went to St. Paul that night and the next morning I was on my way to Yankton. Palmer had the outfit nearly ready by the time I arrived and in a few days we were ready to go out. We always made it a point to pull out of town a few miles to camp the first night, as after the first camp was made, we would know if anything had been left behind. The second night we camped about ten miles from Swan Lake, about forty miles from Yankton. We had hauled out some provisions for a man who was homesteading a claim there—rather his wife was holding the claim while he worked in town and he had sent out the goods—and we camped not far from the house.

The next morning we had gone about three miles, when I discovered an extra picket rope on the wagon. Palmer stopped the outfit and counted all the ropes, finding that we had two more than he had bought. He questioned the men and one admitted he had taken them from the homesteader. Palmer wrote out a receipt and gave it to him, then told him to go back with the ropes and get the receipt signed before he showed up again in that outfit. I wanted to let the man take my horse, but Palmer said:

"No, if you do, you'll never see your horse again and the woman back there will never get her picket ropes. Let

him walk and it will teach him a lesson by the time he overtakes us."

We went up the Vermilion River for ten or twelve miles and camped for dinner, for we did not want to get too far ahead of the poor devil who had to overtake us on foot. Palmer and I always made it a rule that none of our men should steal anything from the homesteaders and ranchmen in a country where we worked or traveled. Some outfits got a bad name that way which made it hard for them on the next trip as well as the rest of us.

While we lay there waiting for our man to catch up with us, we saw two riders coming toward us across the prairie from the east. They were riding work horses and looked like some farmers out on an errand. They wanted dinner and feed for the horses, and we said they could get something to eat but no grain for the horses, as we were on a long trip into a country where we could not get supplies. We had two wagons with six horses and eleven men to feed. So they let their horses graze, and while they rested told us they were from Minnesota and had been breaking up land over on the Sioux River, near Dell Rapids, about thirty miles east. They said their mules had got away from them a day or so before and they had trailed them to the place where they met us. They asked if we knew any late reports about the Northfield robbery—that they had heard the early account but knew nothing else. I had almost seen it, and like a chump I told them all I knew and had heard, including the capture of the Youngers. Then we got out our maps and showed them the settlements in

the country around and the distance to the different places.

We lounged around while the cook was getting dinner and the young fellows set up a cracker box for a target with the bull's-eye marked with axle grease which had run out of the hub. They were always anxious to try out their skill and practice with their revolvers. Every man in the camp had a revolver, though some of them were a joke to Palmer and me, who both carried Colt's .45's. The farmers each had a gun and the boys invited them to shoot too, but they refused, saying they were short of shells. We gladly supplied them with all they wanted to shoot and some to take with them, for the government furnished us with all we needed. The farmers made a fine showing, easily shooting better than any of our men.

After dinner, Palmer and I saw the outfit loaded and started off, then we got our saddle horses. The strangers got theirs and mounted, then rode up to us and said, "Boys, if you see any one looking for Frank and Jesse James, you can tell them you ate dinner with them."

Palmer was a hot-headed Scotchman. He had been all through the Civil War and had worked as an engineer in South America. To-day, people would say he was "hard-boiled." I looked for him to pull his gun, but he wheeled his horse and said, "You —— can go your way and I'll go mine." Then he galloped off after the wagons.

One of them said, "That red-headed Scotchman seems to be insulted because we told him who we were."

"It's a wonder he didn't shoot you," I replied.

"Jesse," said the other, "you hadn't oughta told who we were."

They said they were making for the Missouri River, as they could not stay in the country where we had met them, for there was too much settlement. They told me they were going out west to the Jim River that night, where we had told them they would find settlers and "trade" horses. They started west and I rode away, overtaking Palmer who roasted me for staying to talk to them after he had gone.

About four o'clock that afternoon, we met nine men on horseback, looking for the James boys. These men said the outlaws had stolen the stage horses from the driver on his trip between Flandreau and Sioux Falls, that morning. But when we told about their eating dinner with us and of the way they could handle a six-shooter, the posse decided they were getting too close to the men they had started out to catch. They were ready to turn back, and after some argument among themselves returned home.

The James boys did not go very far west, and soon after leaving us they turned south and went down the Vermilion River, "trading" horses with an old farmer while he was asleep. They reached the Missouri near Vermilion City during the night, stole a boat in which they crossed the river, and were then on familiar ground. They then went south into Kansas and back across the river into Missouri.

We left the Vermilion and bore off to the northeast toward Lake Kampeska. To-day the busy little city of

Watertown is located near the lake, but in 1876 a man named Van Tassell was living there on a homestead. East of the lake, we ran across an interesting failure in railroad building, for in 1872 the Chicago & North Western Railroad had run a rough line to Lake Kampeska in order to hold land grants which they had received from the government. The road had been graded, the bridges had been built, and the steel laid, but only one train was run over it. The country west of Mankato, Minnesota, had very little settlement and a mixed train ran as far west as Tracy about three times a week. The Dakota branch soon went to pieces. The settlers tore up the ties and the prairie fires burned the bridges, so that in many places we saw two iron rails suspended across small creeks. Though it was a failure as a railroad, it paid the company well, however, for it established their claim to many acres of land. In 1880 the road was rebuilt and extended to Redfield.

Lake Kampeska is the largest in the lake region which reaches from Madison north into North Dakota. This entire section shows the remains of the glaciers which once covered it and melted here, leaving many beautiful lakes. We followed up this valley across the Wahpeton and Sisseton Reservation to old Fort Ransom.

At Waubay, an Indian came into our camp with a letter, telling what a good man he was and that he had been friendly to the white settlers and deserved any help one could give to him. It was not unusual to meet Indians with such recommendations. But Palmer had no use for any Indian and played a joke on this one by writing an-

other letter for him to carry. Palmer wrote that he thought this Indian was a lying, thieving old rascal and as big a renegade as the worst of them; that he was a confirmed beggar and a general nuisance. The Indian went away pleased after a good meal and no doubt that was all he wanted. He probably never knew the fun Palmer had with him.

Fort Ransom had been the scene of a battle in 1862 between the whites and the Indians and the remains of the old stockade were still standing. This was near the present site of Lisbon on the Sheyenne. We crossed this river on a beaver dam wide enough for the wagons, and went on about four miles, where we camped for the night on the high prairie.

Palmer told the cook to boil some beans, for the lake water we had been using had so much alkali in it the beans would not cook and he thought we could have some now in the river water. But the cook had failed to fill his water kegs at the river and had no water to use. I was tired of "sowbelly," hot bread, and coffee, for we had had nothing else for some time, and I offered to go to the river, which I thought was about a mile to the west of our camp.

I found it was much farther, fully two miles, and darkness had fallen by the time I reached the river. I had gone down a draw which I missed on my return and followed another draw which led me away to the north, but I did not discover my mistake till I got back up on the prairie and could not see the tent lights and the camp fire. Then I knew I was lost, for I had no idea of which way to go to

reach the camp and I wandered around for some time. Soon I heard the boys in camp shooting to let me know the location and I started in that direction.

When I could see the flash from the guns, I called to the men and they came out to meet me. I still had what was left of the two pails of water, though I had spilled a good deal, but the boys had a lot of fun with me for getting lost when I was the most experienced man in the crowd. Palmer said he had not cared about losing me, but he did feel bad about losing the two good water pails.

"But I didn't lose the pails," I answered, coming into the light. "I still have both pails and some water besides."

"Well, Zack," said Palmer, "you're a bigger fool than I ever expected to see. Any man can get lost, but nobody but a fool would wander around on the prairie four hours and carry two pails of water."

The whole crew had fun with me and said I must have been "awful hungry for beans," but Palmer was so mad at the cook, he made the poor fellow stay up till the beans were boiled, though it was after midnight when I got back with the water. But the beans did taste good for breakfast.

The next day we went on about thirty miles with no water for our horses and none for the men except the small amount remaining from what I had brought from the river. That night we camped at a dried-up lake but thought we could get water by digging. We dug a well twenty-two feet deep, but found no water, and we had none till we reached the Northern Pacific the next forenoon and got water from the section men.

Our work lay along the Northern Pacific, for we were surveying the land grant to this road, and as it was getting late in the fall, we ran two crews and finished it in about a month. The weather was already getting disagreeable and on October 2d we had about six inches of snow, but it soon melted and afterward we had a lovely Indian summer to finish our work.

We decided to return on a different route, as the provisions were low and by going farther east we would strike more settlements, where we could get food as well as hay for the horses. We took the old Fort Totten and Abercrombie Trail which brought us to the Red River fourteen miles above where Wahpeton is built, but the settlement was then at Breckenridge on the east side of the river. This was a new town, for the railroad had built in just that summer and was booming, for the country to the east was settling up rapidly. Most of the business places were saloons and our men celebrated their return to civilization by all getting drunk except "Sock" Drew and myself.

Going on south along the west side of the Bois de Sioux River to Lake Traverse and along the west side of Big Stone Lake we came to Joe Brown's place. Brown had married an Indian woman and had lived there since some time in the '40's, so his place was a landmark in that vicinity. On Big Stone Lake, I was surprised to meet De Rocheau, who had trapped in the Wind River Mountains with Jim Bridger and me in 1869 and had made the trip back with me from the Yellowstone, but I had

not seen him since he left me in Yankton that summer.

South of Big Stone, along Yellow Bank Creek, we came to where "Cap" Herrick lived at the present town of Garry, then to Medalia on the east side of the Sioux and Flandreau before we arrived at Sioux Falls. There Charley Howard and Bill van Epps had two small stores and a few houses were scattered about. To-day it is a fine city and a business and railroad center for the entire section, but in 1876 it had no railroad and goods were hauled from Luverne, twenty-two miles east.

Before leaving Yankton, the early part of September, I had been subpœnaed by the government as a witness against Jack McCall who was to be tried for murder in the United States Court in November. I had been allowed to leave Yankton under bonds that I would be on hand for the trial. We reached Sioux Falls a few days before the trial was to begin and I knew the outfit would not get back to Yankton in time, so I left them and walked on into Yankton, making the sixty-five miles from Sioux Falls in one day, and reported to the United States attorney the same evening. I was not called as a witness the next day, but when the court was called, I was congratulated by Judge Shannon for being present and on time.

Although Jack had been acquitted by the miners' trial, he had been arrested in Wyoming and brought back to Dakota Territory for trial before the federal court. Sentiment in the Hills had been in his favor, for Wild Bill was

not the popular hero he has been pictured by later writers, but was a bully whom men feared but did not respect. George Shingle had been a gold weigher in the Bell-Union Theater in Deadwood and knew Bill well. Before going to the Hills, Shingle had been with the Union Pacific in Kansas, and he told on the witness stand of knowing seven men whom Bill had killed.

McCall was defended by General W. H. H. Beadle, who was appointed by the court and who tried earnestly to find something on which to base a defense. He made a strong point of the court not having jurisdiction in Deadwood, as the line between Wyoming and Dakota was in dispute at the time. General Beadle asked me to talk with Jack and try to find out something of his past and why he had killed Wild Bill, but McCall would tell me nothing that we could use in his favor.

Jack claimed to me that he was born in Kentucky but McCall was not his right name. He said an older brother had gone to Kansas several years before and had been killed there by Wild Bill. Jack had left home to kill Bill in revenge and he had killed him and felt justified for it. He said he did not care how the trial turned out nor what was done to him, and he was glad that he had killed Hickok, but did not want his mother or sister to know about it and how his life had ended.

He did not take the witness stand in his own defense, and he was found guilty of murder in the first degree. When the judge asked him if he had anything to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced, Jack stood up

and hitched up his pants. He looked over the courtroom and back to the bench.

"Nothing whatever, judge," he said, in a low, calm voice.

He was sentenced to hang.

CHAPTER IX

DEADWOOD IN 1877

THE campaign against the Indians which had been climaxed by the death of Custer and his men broke the power of the Sioux and most of them returned to their reservations. The hostiles under the leadership of the wily Sitting Bull had escaped into Canada and they stayed there for a number of years, but finally came back to the Standing Rock Reservation, where Sitting Bull was killed in 1890.

The United States had been treating with the Indians who had returned to the agencies, for mining rights in the Hills, and the Congress which met in December, 1876, confirmed the treaty. This was followed by another rush from all parts of the country even greater than the year before. But I had no desire to hunt for gold and hired out to Gardner Brothers to take a load of provisions in to Deadwood and lumber for a warehouse as far as Fort Pierre.

On December 15th, we left Yankton for Deadwood, about four hundred and forty miles distant, with ninety-six yoke of oxen and thirty wagons. We had twelve wagons loaded with lumber and the others with flour, pork, butter, and eggs. The pork was dressed hogs which the farmers had raised and killed and which the Gardners had bought up while I was getting the outfit together.

They had bought several thousand dozen eggs and several thousand pounds of butter from the farmers and country stores in southern Dakota and across the river in Nebraska. We hired men to pack the eggs in light barrels which we lined with paper, wrapping each egg separately to keep them from breaking and from freezing. A layer of oats went on the bottom, then a layer of eggs, and so on till the barrel was filled and set on the wagon in a high box. When the wagon box was filled with these barrels, we packed oats in around them.

The first five days took us to Firesteel Creek and Christmas found us at old Fort Thompson on the Missouri River, where I was invited to dinner with the families of Dr. Livingston, the agent, and his clerk, Russell. My Christmas gift was butter and eggs, and such produce was a treat in homes so far away from the farmers.

We followed up the Missouri and reached Fort Pierre on New Year's Day. There we were told of a dance at Joe Reed's ranch fifteen miles northeast, so we got the stage driver to take three of us over to the party. The crowd was made up of Reed, his foreman Jim Seals and Mrs. Seals, six half-breed girls, and about twice as many half-breed men. There were two Wilson and four Narcelle girls. Some of them, especially the Wilsons, were smart and had been given some education, so they taught in the agency day schools. We had a good time, but I did not realize what a good impression I was making that night. The next year, Narcelle senior offered to build me a house and give me "fifty cow" and "fifty pony" if I would

marry one of his daughters and live near him to look after his business.

Leaving the lumber and the bulls which had hauled it on the east side of the river with four men to care for them, the train left Fort Pierre January 2d and reached the Cheyenne on the 10th, making one hundred twenty miles in eight days. We had had several bad storms and the ground had been covered with deep snow since we had left the Crow Creek Agency at old Fort Thompson. On January 11th we had unusually threatening weather, and in the afternoon we had to fight one of the worst blizzards I have ever seen.

A high wind from the northwest sent the snow almost straight against us in front and on our right side till we could hardly keep the bulls on the trail. The bitter cold made the snow like icicles and it was so thick it seemed to come in sheets rather than flakes. A man could scarcely distinguish the outlines of the wagon ahead of his own oxen. By five o'clock darkness was coming on and we made camp at Twelve Mile Water Holes.

We drove the wagons into a circle and locked them together with log chains to keep the cattle corralled all night. The snow piled as high as the wagons on the west side and gave them some shelter from the wind. Their breath froze over their nostrils and I could hear them whistle as they breathed. All night I went about among them, removing the ice from their noses to keep them from smothering.

The men had no shelter but the cook tent, for they were

expected to sleep in their wagons. But that night, we all stood up in the tent and kept warm around the little sheet-iron stove which was kept red-hot. Soon the snow around the tent began to melt and the water ran under the tent walls till we were standing in several inches of mud.

In the morning there were four dead oxen which belonged to a man named Brown who had seven yoke and was making the trip with us. Neither he nor his son would go out and help me during the night, and I had had all I could do to care for my own cattle. It took us all the next day to shovel the tent and wagons out of the drifts and to get the bulls out on the prairie for a little feed. We reached Washta Springs, fifteen miles farther on, the second day after the storm, but I had kept four men of us ahead all day shoveling snow out of the draws.

The horse team with the tent and cook outfit reached the springs first to have supper ready when the men got in. When the outfit pulled in, they told me one ox had played out about seven miles back on the trail and they had had to leave him. I did not like to leave the ox on the prairie to starve, as he would have done with the grass buried under the snow as it was, and after eating my supper I took one of the horses and went back to him. My bed pad was some hay stuffed into gunny sacks, and I took this hay and four gallons of water in two kegs which I hung across the saddle, one on each side, in a feed bag. I drove him down the draw a little out of the wind and left the hay and the remainder of the water in a pail I had brought. I returned to camp about midnight.

The next morning, I told the boys to go on over to Box Elder Creek, about ten miles, and wait there for me; that I would walk back and get the ox and overtake them that night. My buffalo overcoat and some lunch I left where we had camped, with some feed for the ox. I found him and returned to Washta Springs where I watered and fed the ox, ate my lunch, and rested. I tied my coat on the ox, for it was heavy to carry, and I was warm enough from walking.

I had not gone far after the outfit when it began to snow terribly, and soon I could not see the tracks the wagons had made just a few hours before. I was afraid to keep on for fear I would lose the trail completely, so I took the coat off the ox and let him take care of himself. Near by, I found a little draw where the snow had drifted pretty deep. I dug out a hole with my hands, then put on my overcoat and crawled in.

There I lay till morning, but I dared not go to sleep, as I was afraid the snow would drift over and smother me. With the stick I had used to drive the ox, I kept a hole open for air and at last I could see the stars, so knew it had stopped snowing. I was not afraid, for I was sure I would come through all right, but never before or since have I felt so alone in the whole universe. Then one feels very close to his God and very despairing if he has none. Though he may say very little about it, such an experience makes a lasting impression that he never outlives. I know it was the longest night I have ever known, for I had gone in there about four in the afternoon and it was seven the

next morning when I crawled out, as soon as it was light.

About a mile to the south, I saw my ox standing by some willows, so I got him and started on toward the outfit. I had gone only about two miles when I met two of the men on horseback coming to look for me, so I let one of them drive the ox and I rode his horse back to camp. I got my breakfast and started the outfit on ahead, but the cook wagon waited there till the man came up with the ox. I fed the ox while the man ate his dinner, and took the train into Rapid City that day, January 15th.

We had gone over four hundred miles in just one month in midwinter with a bull train and I had lost just one ox in crossing the Cheyenne River. But I was convinced that Washta Springs was a hoodoo for me, as it was here I had killed the Indian and recovered the pilgrim horses the previous August.

At Rapid City I sold part of my goods, mostly flour and pork, but this was a mistake, as I got only fifteen dollars a hundred pounds for the flour and twenty dollars for the pork, and I could have sold it for much more at Deadwood, though at the time I was well pleased to sell at so much profit.

We stayed in Rapid two weeks or more making sleds for our wagons. The two storms which had struck us between Fort Pierre and the Hills had covered the valleys with many feet of snow and the trails were impassable for the wagons. Noah Newbanks had a feed corral there, in which we kept our cattle and a log shack in which our cook prepared our meals. Newbanks became a well-to-do ranch-

man later and lived at Pierre, where he is still active in a bank. I saw many other men in Rapid whom I had known or met in Yankton, and some of them spent their lives in the Hills or some other part of Dakota. John Brennen married there and later was Indian agent at the Red Cloud Agency for many years.

We found an old fellow who knew a little more about building than we did and he had a few tools, but the sleds were made entirely of ash and oak poles, with wooden pins instead of nails in the few places where nails would have been used if there had been any. The sleds were about ten feet long with wooden posts about eighteen inches high to lift the fender above the runner. Selling part of the loads at Rapid made it unnecessary to use all the wagons and cattle on the rest of the trip and I sold four yoke of oxen to Leedy Brothers for one thousand dollars in gold. That was a good profit, as we had paid from seventy-five to ninety dollars a yoke for them in Yankton. The Leedy boys were starting a sawmill and wanted the oxen for logging.

The ox I had saved by going back and spending the night in the snow bank I traded to Tom Madden for hay. Madden had been one of the party with which I had started for Montana in 1870 but had left at Fort Abraham Lincoln. He had gone to Montana, but only for a short time, and afterward had been knocking around along the Missouri River till the gold rush had taken him into the Hills.

After getting our wagon boxes onto the sleds and

loaded up again, we pulled on for Deadwood through snow from two to three feet deep, so our progress was slower than before. Fourteen Mile Ranch was little more than a corral and a shack with a dirt roof, but it looked mighty good to us when we first saw the smoke coming up, in the evening after we had plowed through snow all day. There we found a man who had been badly wounded by a mountain lion. He had been out hunting and had shot the lion, wounding it so that it attacked him and nearly tore his arm off before his dog had got to his aid. The lion had then turned on the dog and the hunter had killed it with his knife. His partner had dressed the wound and cared for it as well as he could, but it was very bad and the man was suffering a lot. He got well, though, and had the lion skinned and mounted and it was on exhibition in a bank in Yankton for a number of years. I think it was the biggest mountain lion I have ever seen.

The second night after leaving Rapid, we camped on Bear Butte Creek near the present site of Sturgis. Near this place the previous summer the Indians had attacked a camping party as they were leaving the Hills after General Crook's orders to us all to go. An old frontiersman named Belcher had camped with his family when the band of Indians came up intending to surprise him. But Belcher surprised them by killing two Indians before they got near enough to shoot at him and they took the dead bodies and rode away.

The third night, we got to Centennial Park, a lovely open grassy valley above a camp called Crook City, and

we spent all the next day letting our wagons down the hill into Deadwood Gulch.

Although the prospectors had been ordered out of the Hills the summer before and most of them had been escorted out by the soldiers, it would have taken a line of soldiers around the entire region to keep them out, and the same men were again in the Hills before the soldiers were back in camp. Then as soon as the Indian treaty was confirmed by Congress, a rush had followed, although it was already winter and provisions had been scarce.

We reached Deadwood about the last of January or early in February, and the snow was melting in the street where it was tramped and cut up so much. Our sleds were now a hindrance to us, for they sank into the mud halfway to the wagon boxes, often getting stuck till we hitched on extra bulls to pull them out. One great trouble was the narrow streets, for we had so little room to turn in, and when two bull trains were in town at the same time, they could hardly get around to unload their goods. The outfits usually camped below the town and brought up one or two wagons at a time to load and unload.

But that winter, the train I took in was the only supply train brought in, and we got unheard-of prices for our produce. The eggs sold for seventy-five cents a dozen, the butter for seventy-five cents and a dollar a pound. The flour brought twenty-five dollars a hundred, and the pork from twenty-five dollars up, for a hundred pounds. I rented a log shack and stored what pork and flour I

did not sell at once. Later Henry Gardner came out from Yankton and sold the balance of the flour for one hundred dollars a hundred and the pork for fifty dollars. The oats I sold for fifteen dollars a hundred, but I had to pay one hundred twenty dollars a ton for hay, in gold dust at eighteen dollars an ounce.

I had been able to get hay for my oxen all the way from Yankton to Fort Pierre, and after that I had given them one feed a day of ground feed, when I could not get hay, so they were in fine condition and I sold several of them for beef. One ox, a half-breed shorthorn, brought one hundred seventy-five dollars and Calamity Jane said he was the finest bull she had ever seen.

One of my bullwhackers, George Flemming, had a lot of trouble driving his oxen, for he seldom got them yoked to their right places and I had to watch his bulls every morning.

"George," I said to him one day, "can't you tell those bulls apart?"

"No, sir, I never could tell one ox from another," he answered.

"Well, is there anything you can tell apart?" I asked.

"Yes," said George, "I can always tell sheep."

"How can you tell sheep?"

"By their faces—they all look different."

I laughed and the other boys did too.

"Yes, you can," I said, "and I'll bet, if we had sheep here, you'd say you could tell chickens apart."

All the way in from Fort Pierre, George had been telling the rest of the boys that as soon as he got to Deadwood he was going to treat the whole outfit.

"George," I said to him, "if you treat this crowd, it will cost you nearly a month's wages, if not more." He was getting forty dollars a month.

"Why, what will whisky cost a drink?" he asked.

I told him, "About four bits, at least."

"How much is that?" asked Flemming.

"Fifty cents." In the mining camps and trading posts, money was called two bits, four bits, and six bits instead of twenty-five, fifty, and seventy-five cents, and nothing sold for less than two bits.

"Well," said George, "that will only cost me thirteen dollars, for there are only twenty-six of us besides you and you don't drink."

"No, I don't drink," I replied, "but you bet I'm going to sample it when you treat."

"Well, then, that's only thirteen, fifty."

"Yes," I said, "but you didn't figure on the girls, did you?"

"What girls?" he asked. "Where do any girls come in?"

"Well, George," I said, "as soon as this outfit pulls into town, there will be one or two girls to meet every man of us and say 'Hello, Honey,' 'There's my sweetheart,' or something like that. And when you begin treating this crowd, every man in the saloon and every girl in the dance hall will line up to the bar too."

"If any girls say things like that to me, I sure will treat 'em and the whole crowd too," he said.

Our arrival was about as I had told him it would be, but George treated as he had said he would and told me to pay the bill and take it out of his wages. I took out my gold sack and the weigher weighed out twenty-four dollars in gold, for he claimed there were forty-eight men and women at four bits a drink. But Flemming did not mind that, for he was the hero of the camp till another "tenderfoot" got in.

Most of my men were from the East and did not understand frontier ways—everything was new to them and they wanted to see all they could. I was the only one who had been in the Black Hills before or in any mining camp, and besides the responsibility of taking care of my bulls and getting feed for them and selling my produce, I was kept busy taking care of the boys and keeping them out of trouble the best I could. One of the men, Stoddard, I had known at Yankton for several years, and the first night in camp he and I followed them up and saw several of them go up to a house with a red light and knock on the door. A little slide in the door was opened and part of a face appeared. My young brother, J. W., was in the crowd and he asked who lived there.

"Hop Lee," said the man at the opening, "Hop Lee, him live here."

"That ain't the man we want to see," said Wils.

"No Melican man here," said the Chinaman, "no Mel-

ican woman here, just China man here—just China woman here; come in, come in."

But the boys went back down the street and strolled into a saloon, where an old white-haired man was running a card game and getting customers with this singsong:

"Come on up, boys, and put your money down—everybody beats the old man—the girls all beat the old man—the boys all beat the old man—everybody beats the old man—forty years a gambler—the old fool—everybody beats the old man—put your money down, boys, and beat the old man."

He was not such a fool, however, as he claimed to be and the "old man" was winning most of the money.

Several faro tables were in operation and Madam Mustache was dealing at one of these, for the gamblers who had left when General Crook had ordered every one off the reservation had all flocked back as soon as mining was permitted.

Stoddard and I joked the boys about their visit to Hop Lee and after a while told them we had all better go back to camp and to bed. We started down the street and came to a dance hall, so some of the men wanted to dance and asked me if I would pay for them. Placer gold was the only money used in camp and they had no gold sacks. I told them I would, so we went in and they soon had partners, but had danced only a few steps when the caller cried, "All belly up."

The girls all pulled their partners up to the bar where

most of the men took whisky but the girls took cigars. After the dance, the girls turned the cigars in and got the money for them.

When I went up to pay the bill, the boys found out it cost them one dollar each for one dance, so they thought they had had enough fun for one night and we went back to camp.

In three or four days, we had unloaded our wagons and were ready to start back. We camped at Bear Butte Creek a day or two, helping to trail a bunch of cattle which the Indians had stolen from another freight outfit, but we gave up the chase after following them all one day, for we had neither the horses nor the guns to make a fight against them.

But I had a little skirmish of my own while camped there. One of my bullwhackers was a little German who had been the butt of jokes in our outfit from the start, and he took it good-naturedly. Another camp was located near us, and one of these men while visiting in my camp began making fun of the little German. When I thought it had gone too far, I told him to quit, that no one could come into my camp and abuse one of my men. He made a nasty reply and I knocked him down. Other men came running from his camp, but I pulled my gun and told them to keep away, for I did not want any more men mixed up in what might have turned into a shooting fray.

At that time, I was pretty well known for being quick and sure with my gun and I seldom had to use it. An outfit or a camp soon found out I could and were satis-

fied to see me shoot at targets. I often met this man in later years, but he never seemed to forget our little mix-up on Bear Butte.

When we had been in Rapid City on our way up, there had been no saloon and no wild life such as we had found in Deadwood. But Tom Madden had built a log building for a saloon and part of our load from Deadwood was whisky, wine, gin, etc., for his stock. I left the outfit a few miles above Rapid and rode into town to get hay for the bulls. About the time they should have pulled in, a man came to me and said I had better go back and see about my outfit, for the men were all drunk.

I rode back about a mile to where the trail crossed Rapid Creek, and, sure enough, they had all been drinking. They had tapped a keg of whisky and taken out several quarts, then had tried to fill it again by holding the keg in the creek for the water to run in. But the fellow who was holding the keg had slipped and fallen, losing his hold on the keg which had gone down the creek. They had rescued it, but not before the whisky had more than half run out; and they had filled the keg with water, spoiling what whisky had been left in the keg. They had to pay five dollars a gallon for the whisky, so their fun cost them fifty dollars. They had the ten gallons of watered whisky, though it was so weak that no one got drunk on it and they had learned a lesson about trying to steal whisky and about filling a keg in the creek.

We changed the boxes back on to the wagons from the sleds and were ready to go back to Fort Pierre. While we

had been building sleds at Rapid and unloading at Deadwood, the weather had turned warm and the snow on the prairie was most all gone. I did not like that, for it meant that the Indians would be on the move as soon as the snow was off. And sure enough, before we got to the Cheyenne, we had trouble with them.

We had camped at the Five Mile Water Holes at night, and about daylight I heard the herder bringing in the bulls, so I climbed down from the wagon where I slept, to hold one end of the corral with a whip and keep the oxen from running through till the drivers could get them yoked up. We always drove our wagons into a corral when we stopped for noon or night.

The herder had tied the horse he had ridden to a wagon on the outside of the corral, and, hearing shots, I jumped back into the wagon and grabbed my old Sharp's, sending several shots in the direction from which I thought the firing had come. Other boys grabbed their guns and began shooting, till I told them that would do and to get spades and throw up pits for protection. The pony had reared at the first shots from the Indians and had broken away. He walked off a short distance and lay down and soon we could see he was dead, but we dared not go out to him till night, for I did not want the men to endanger themselves. We then found he had been hit in the back, just behind the saddle, the bullet going down into his body.

We lay there all that day behind the pits, but there was no more shooting nor did we see any Indians. Dur-

ing the day, three head of oxen broke out but we did not dare go after them. When night came we watered the cattle at a water hole near the camp and got drinking water for ourselves, but did not risk building a fire for cooking and we had rather slim living on hard-tack and water.

The Indians did not bother us during the night, and when the second morning came I took the other horse and scouted around the country. I could not see any Indians, but I did see plenty of pony tracks and came to the conclusion that the Indians had gone. I went down the draw to look for the oxen which had broken out and I found the offal of all three, where they had been butchered and the meat taken away. Then I knew that we could go on.

On this trip I got past Washta Springs without trouble, and two days later we camped for the night on the north fork of Bad River. I took the outfit thirty or forty rods down the creek from the regular crossing and on the east side to camp on the edge of some timber out of the wind. The herder had taken the bulls up a draw east of camp and I kept one of the men on guard, as I had done each night since our pony had been killed and our oxen butchered.

About ten o'clock, I was awakened by the guard, who said he thought he could hear "Injuns." I got up, took my gun, and went with him across the creek to the west side where we lay down in the brush. Between us and the sky line, just a few hundred feet west of where we were lying, we could see about a hundred Sioux, men and

women with perhaps one hundred fifty head of horses, going up the creek to the north. They were Brûlés, as I could tell from their language, and I could hear enough of their talk to know they wanted to cross the Fort Pierre Trail before daylight and get away without being seen. They went west to the head of the creek where I afterwards learned there was a spring and camped there, as we could see by the light from their fires.

We went out after the herder and had him bring the bulls in to camp. Then we got the men up, yoked up the cattle very quietly, and pulled out in the night, keeping on the prairie to prevent any noise the wagons might have made on the frozen ground of the beaten trail. After the train had moved on, I stayed behind to tell, as well as I could from the tracks, how many Indians had passed.

I then rode on a mile or two before I swung to the north for four or five miles till I could see the camp by daylight. How I longed for the running horse I had had the summer before at Washta Springs, as I would have given them all the fun they wanted, with my old Sharp's! But I had only one of the farm horses with which we had pulled the cook wagon before the other one was killed. So I had to go back to the outfit, but we did not see any more Indians and reached Fort Pierre about a week later.

As I had left thirty yoke of oxen on the east side of the Missouri, I thought it would be best to take the wagons and the rest of the bulls across the river and leave them there till the boats brought up some freight. There was a lot of water on the ice and I was afraid I

would have trouble getting them across. However, I decided to try it and put one yoke of oxen on the tongue of the lead wagon, then took one light yoke of bulls out on the ice. I tied a picket rope to their yoke and to the tongue of the wagon and we started over.

The river was deep at the place I had picked out to cross and very swift, for there it runs between the west bank and an island. I had an ax in my hand to sound the ice as I walked ahead. The lead bulls had crossed about sixty feet of ice and the team on the tongue of the wagon were about twenty feet from the bank, when the ice gave way and let them into the water. The men on the wagons held them back with the brakes, but the chain which held the oxen to the tongue came unfastened so that they went under the ice and were dragging the lead team with them. I jumped in and cut the rope with my ax, freeing the head team, but the one team were out of sight, going down the river under the ice. The next spring, the remains were found on the bank about twenty miles downstream.

That ended any attempt to cross the river and leave the bulls with some white ranchmen on the east side, off the reservation. So I took the outfit up to a store run by Jim McGarry, a sub-trader from the agency, and turned them over to him. He got some Indians to look after the bulls till spring and they were taken up Bad River a few miles and herded. The Indians did well, too, and when I returned, they had every ox I had left with them. That was better than the white men did with the cattle I had left on the east side of the river before going to the

Hills. They had let three oxen get killed by falling through the roof of a dugout stable which they could walk onto from the hillside.

It was then about the twentieth of February and we had traveled about six hundred fifty miles from Yankton to Deadwood and back to Fort Pierre in about sixty-five days or about ten miles a day in midwinter, although we had lost a number of days by storms, in building our sleds, and by Indian attacks. The oxen had had very little feed after leaving Fort Pierre except what they rustled on the prairie and I had lost only six of them—one died from exposure, two drowned, and three killed by the Indians, besides the three which had been killed by falling into the stable. One horse had been killed, but I had lost no men and we had had very little sickness.

Most of the men decided to stay at Fort Pierre till the boats could come up the river and the freighting start again. The four men who had been there since New Year's had used the cattle to haul logs and had helped to build a house which was the first building put up on the present site of Pierre. This house stood on land which was held by a squatter, an old Frenchman named Napoleon Ducheneaux, who later filed on it when it was open for homestead entries; and he lived in it till he sold his land to the North Western Railroad for the town site.

At Fort Pierre, there was only the little trading store run by McGarry and a few log houses in which friendly Indians lived. The old buildings and stockade which had been used by the fur traders and the government for a

military post were located some distance up the river and by 1877 were nearly destroyed.

A stage line ran from Yankton to Fort Sully, thirty-five miles up the Missouri from Fort Pierre. Sully was a well-established army post and was occupied till 1892, when it was abandoned after the Sioux had become agency Indians.

After putting the cattle out with the Indians, I stored the yokes, chains, ropes, wagon covers, and other equipment in a little log house and four of us took the stage back to Yankton, arriving on the night of March 1st. The next day had been set for the hanging of Jack McCall, and early the next morning I went up to the jail to see him. Jack thanked me for coming and asked me to go with him to the scaffold.

About a mile out of town, near the Catholic cemetery, a scaffold had been built. The United States marshal deputized me to go with him and I was handcuffed to McCall on one side while Billy Powers was handcuffed to him on the other. When we reached the scaffold, we went up steps to the platform which was about twelve feet high, where the marshal and a priest were waiting. In a box were straps for securing his arms and legs, and the marshal now put these on him and took off the handcuffs.

The priest and McCall knelt in prayer, and as the priest arose, Powers and I stepped forward to help Jack to his feet but he sprang up easily by himself. The marshal asked if he had anything to say and he replied nothing

except to thank the marshal and the jailers for the kindness they had shown him. McCall then shook hands with Powers, the marshal, and the good Father as he called the priest, and then he turned to me.

"Good-by, Zack," he said. He thanked me for staying with him and said he hoped to meet me "over there."

"Jack," I asked, "where do you think you are going?"

"Why, over to see St. Peter, of course," he answered.

"Well, Jack," I replied, "if you are going there, tell St. Peter I'll be over by and by."

McCall turned to the marshal and said that was all he had to say and the black cap was pulled down over his head. This cap was a sack of black oilcloth split for about six inches on each side to come down over the shoulders. The marshal put the rope over his head and pushed the knot up to his neck.

"Make it tight, marshal," said Jack, and the knot was pushed up tighter around his neck. The marshal then stepped back and some one below the platform pulled the trapdoor on which McCall was standing. He dropped through the floor for five or six feet so that his head was below the platform and the body swung back and forth a few minutes.

Powers and I could see it plainly all the time from above. Once the knees were drawn up, but there was no other movement we could see. After a few minutes, the marshal, the doctors, and one or two more went inside the inclosure and soon pronounced him dead. The neck had been broken by the drop of the body and appeared about

a foot long. The doctor thought death had been instantaneous.

I have seen men shot to death, knifed to death, hung by the civil authorities, and lynched. Some died praying and some died cursing the men who took their lives. But of all the men I have seen meet death, I have never seen another who had the same cool courage as Jack McCall. Neither at his trial nor at his execution did I ever see him show one sign of a tear or any fear or remorse. And yet he claimed to me he was only twenty-three years old.

CHAPTER X

THE BLACK HILLS TRAIL

While I waited in Yankton for the river to open two men, Adams and French, brought in two carloads of horses which they kept at Gardner Brothers' barn. Another man, Clarence Van Tassell, had secured the contract to take mail from Fort Pierre to Deadwood. Adams, French, Van Tassell, and the Gardners formed a company to run a stage and freight line and to carry the mail from Fort Pierre, and I was engaged as foreman. The next five or six weeks I spent helping to get the outfit together.

We got four of the old thorough-brace, eighteen passenger, overland stagecoaches from St. Louis and sent them to Fort Pierre. Sixty to seventy head of horses and some fifteen or twenty men were sent up with them, and the rest of the outfit and supplies were taken on the first boat with French, Adams, and myself. We had four horses and a light wagon with us, two carloads of hay, and several hundred bushels of grain, besides the tents, stoves, dishes, and grub for the stage drivers along the route. It was all loaded onto the steamboat *Carroll*, owned by Captain Burleigh, who had named me "Custer" at Fort Lincoln several years before.

It was early for boats to be on the river, as the ice had not broken on the upper Missouri above Bismarck, so the inspectors would not issue a license and we could

not get any insurance. But we were anxious to get to Fort Pierre and have the stage line in operation by the time the regular boats began running and we were taking chances. Altogether there were eight horses and mules, four hundred tons of freight, and two hundred fifty passengers. Among these was a friend of mine, Colonel Mark W. Sheafe from Elk Point, Judge Ash and his family, and several merchants from Yankton, and a man named Collins from Sioux City, who was taking a printing press into the Black Hills to start a newspaper.

The baled hay was stored in the hold of the boat and the grain was on deck. The printing press stood on deck at the front of the boat covered by a tarpaulin. There were also several barrels of whisky and other liquors from a wholesale liquor firm in Yankton, going to Deadwood.

We had been on the river several days, for the boats could not travel on the Missouri at night, often because of trees and other débris drifting down, but at this season because of floating ice. We had reached a landing near Bijou Hills and had tied up for the night to get fuel at a wood yard. The crew were loading wood by the light of a torch so we would be ready to move at daylight and I was sitting on the steps which led up to the cabin, with a man from Montana, watching the men at work. The torch was set on the bank to light the work both on the boat and on shore and was fed frequently with wood and oil to keep it blazing. A wind was blowing and the sparks were going toward the boat, so I was uneasy about them going into the hold, for the hatch was open. I called the

attention of the mate to the sparks, but he told me to mind my own business; that it was his business to look after that boat, not mine. He began his remarks with an oath and ended with one, of course.

"I have a good notion to knock that raw-mouthed nigger driver into the river," I said to the Montana man.

But he replied, "Don't pay any attention to him. He's drunk anyway."

And soon after that we went up into the cabin and talked to the boat clerk and Adams, then played cards till about eleven o'clock, when I returned to the deck where my bed was rolled out in the box of the light wagon. I had taken off one boot when I smelled smoke from burning hay and pulled it back on again without my sock, which I never did find. I ran back to the engine room and told the engineer the boat was on fire.

"Run back and call the firemen!" he cried.

They were sleeping under the boilers. I called them, then ran forward, and told the man who slept in the wagon box with me to get our luggage off and to cut down the wagon box which was swung up to the floor of the upper deck.

Before we could get the hose coupled, the engineer started the pump and we were drenched. I could not find the watchman of the boat, but I saw the fire was in the hold as the smoke was coming up around the hatch. About that time, the mate ran up and pulled up the hatch, and the flames shot to the upper deck and drove us all back. I ran back to where the mules and horses

were tied and with the owner of the mules helping me, cut them all loose and got them into the river by backing them off the boat into the water.

By that time the whole boat was afire and it lighted the river all around, so the horses and mules could see to swim over to an island—all except one blind mule which swam round and round, being afraid to leave the noise of the boat, but in danger of being struck by burning timbers as they fell into the river.

As soon as the captain, John Koontz, got on deck, he had holes cut in the sides of the hold and set a spar against the bank. The engines were started and the boat was pushed out into the river. The water, going through the holes, soon flooded the hold and sank the boat in eight or ten feet of water. This saved the freight in the hold, but the whole boat above the lower deck was burned.

All the passengers got off and we saved most of the luggage and all the live stock except a poor bird dog which belonged to a man who, with his wife, had been among the first to leave the boat. The dog ran over the boat hunting them, while the man walked up and down the bank, calling him and the woman screamed and begged some one to get the dog off. At last he was forced to the upper deck, where he stood at the stern of the boat, howling piteously till the flames swept round him.

The printing press was dragged up the runplanks and saved and my men got all our things off, so that I lost only the one sock.

The loud-mouthed mate disappeared as soon as the

captain got on deck, and some one told Captain Koontz that I wanted to knock him into the river, as we had had some words earlier in the evening and I had resented his language. The captain said he was sorry I had changed my mind as it might have saved the boat or at least the upper decks if I had stopped him from opening the hold.

It started to rain about the time the boat had begun burning and we had no shelter. Very little food had been saved, but we soon got fires built and tried to be as comfortable as possible. But remember this was early in the spring and the weather was still cold.

One of the passengers was Mother Ash, who was a friend to every one in Yankton. As we waited there in the rain, she said to me, "Zack, I wouldn't mind the rain so much if I just had some hot coffee."

"Mother Ash," I said, "I'll find out if any coffee was saved, and if it was you'll surely have some."

I looked around among the goods and visited the different groups around the fires. Finally I saw a man from Yankton with a five-pound pail of coffee and I asked him if I could have enough to make some hot coffee for Mrs. Ash, but he said no, that he didn't know how long we might have to stay there and he was going to look out for number one.

"No, you won't," I said. "If we have to starve, we'll all starve together."

So I took the coffee away from him and called to the crowd, "We'll all have hot coffee as soon as we can get it boiled."

We got all the water buckets and every other vessel we could find and before long all had hot coffee, which made us a lot more comfortable.

Some one had thought to cut a small boat loose and get it to shore, and when it became light we rowed over to the island and got the horses and mules. Even the blind mule had found the shore and landed about six hundred feet down the river below the boat.

Of all the men and women who were on that boat, I believe that Sheafe and myself are the only ones living. He still makes his home at Watertown, South Dakota, but is now General Sheafe. At that time, I was twenty-eight years old and dressed like a real frontiersman, for unless I changed to "white man's clothes" to attend some social affair, I wore a buckskin suit and a broad felt hat, boots, and a silk handkerchief knotted around my neck. But I seldom carried my six-shooter except when on the trail or in some wild camp like Fort Pierre or Deadwood.

The rain stopped about ten o'clock, but we were all wet to the skin, cold and miserable. But our discomfort was relieved in the afternoon when Captain Nick Buson came up with his boat *The Far West* and took us all up to Fort Pierre. A few men had started overland with the teams.

Fort Pierre was in one grand turmoil. People had been arriving on the stage which ran from Yankton to Fort Sully and both boats had carried passengers. There were several hundred people there, waiting to go to the Hills on our stage line, and there would be no transportation till we got it started. There were no houses except

McGarry's little store and the few log houses of the Indians, and there were no accommodations for travelers. A man had lumber for a hotel on the boat which burned. A few parties had their own teams and camp outfits, but were too much afraid of the Indians west of Fort Pierre to start out alone and were waiting to go with some big freight train.

We wired at once to the Gardners and Milt came up on the next stage. He sold part of the lumber which I had taken up in January for the hotel and used the rest of it for a small warehouse and barn. The hotel was built as quickly as possible, and was in operation before it was completed that people might have some kind of shelter. It was a two-story building of plain, lapped boards, and had a good shingled roof. Downstairs there was the office, dining room, kitchen, a small sitting room, and the landlord's sleeping room. A few rooms were partitioned off upstairs with one thickness of boards, but the most of the room was left in one big hall with bunks built along the sides, the head to the wall and the foot toward the middle of the room with an aisle between. This was called the "bull pen" or "ram pasture."

The stage company had lost over two thousand dollars' worth of goods—hay, grain, tents, and supplies—and we had no insurance. The horses and stagecoaches which had gone overland arrived about the same time the boat party did, but we could not start the stage line till we got new equipment and supplies, which delayed us about ten days. Even the ox yokes, tent, and wagon cov-

ers that I had left there in the winter had been burned during my absence.

But one thing was fortunate for us all—it was an early spring and there was very little cold weather after we reached Fort Pierre. The stock could get good pasture by the first of May and we did not have to wait for hay, but we could not get along without the grain, tents, and other supplies which we had ordered as soon as we could after ours had burned.

The bulls I had left at Fort Pierre with the Indians had been well cared for and were in fine condition, even better than the ones which our men had kept on the east side. I got all our stuff—cattle, wagons, lumber, etc.—over to the west side on the boat, and with one of the ox yokes for a pattern we soon had made enough for our bull teams, with the new ones which came on the next boat.

I made one trip through to Rapid to place the stage drivers at the different stations and was waiting for the grain to come before putting the stages on the line.

A bull train owned by a man named Gray had reached Fort Pierre while I was getting the freight outfit ready and we started out together for the Hills—my train loaded with grain for the stage stations. At Frozen Man's Creek, a boy about seventeen who was driving for Gray had trouble with his bulls and they jackknifed with him—that is, the leaders turned back instead of going on across—as they went into the creek. The boy was in no way to blame, but it made Gray mad and he struck the boy, knocking him down.

That was more than I could stand by and see without taking the boy's part and I knocked Gray down. He jumped to his feet with his gun in his hand. I had drawn mine also.

"I can play that game too," I said. "You'd better put it up."

Gray walked away, swearing. So once more I had made an enemy by defending the weak against the strong, but it has always made my blood boil to see a strong man abuse a child, a woman, or any one weaker than himself. Gray had an ugly disposition and I was sure that I would hear from him again, so I watched him for the rest of the trip, and gave him no opportunity to take me at a disadvantage. When we reached Rapid City I stopped there, but he went on to Deadwood. Later I heard that the Indians had stolen his cattle and he was broke. So he turned "road agent," as we called bandits or holdup men in the Hills, for by this time stages had been established from Cheyenne, Bismarck and Sidney as well as from Fort Pierre and holdups were common. Those were wild days in Dakota.

Fort Pierre was growing like a field of toadstools. Every stage that arrived was crowded. Every boat was loaded with passengers. Men came in on foot and in large and small pilgrim caravans. But for most of these Fort Pierre was only a stopping place before the final and dangerous dash to the Black Hills, for in spite of the treaty the Sioux had made, dissatisfied bands roamed over the reservation and kept up a

hostile attitude, stealing stock and threatening the travelers.

As soon as the river was open, boats brought load after load of freight which would be transferred to the bull and mule trains and hauled to the mines. Every outfit that had ever hauled goods to the agencies or to the Black Hills was put to work on the Fort Pierre—Black Hills trail and many new ones were fitted out.

Until lumber could be brought in and warehouses built, the freight was piled up on the river bank, but before long, each of the larger forwarding companies had built its own warehouse. The Fred Evans Company and Bramble & Miner put up large buildings and John Dougherty, who had formerly made his headquarters at Sidney, built a large warehouse at Fort Pierre. Men in other lines of business were quick to take advantage of the gold rush and stores were opened overnight. Families soon came to locate in the new town and hotels and boarding houses were numerous.

The wagon trains required frequent repairs and called for blacksmiths and wagonmakers and there were several such shops. The bullwhackers and mule skinners needed clothing, shoes, hats, caps, gloves, and tobacco besides grub, and general stores came in to supply them. George Harris owned one of the largest stores and it was a popular meeting place for the men when they came in off the trail, for Harris was a likable fellow and with his young wife made every one welcome.

But for the first summer everything was so unsettled

and so uncertain that few people took time to build and most of the business of all kinds was done in tents which lined each side of the two streets leading from the boat landing. Every one wanted to make money while the rush was on, and building could wait till winter when better protection would be needed and the freight trains were laid up while the river was frozen.

Fort Pierre had its full share of the rough element which follows such a sudden boom and dance halls were numerous, but there were no saloons, for it was on an Indian reservation. Notorious characters, both men and women, known in many Western mining camps and river towns, flocked in to share and add to the excitement, and Calamity Jane went back and forth to the Hills with some gambler or freighter.

There was no law and there were no officers. A man's safety depended on his ability to mind his own business and on his skill with his revolver. Although there were no saloons, whisky was easily obtained before a United States commissioner was appointed to enforce the law prohibiting its sale on Indian land. Gambling was a popular recreation and was looked on almost as an honorable profession. The men lived hard lives on the trail earning their money and they wanted to play hard when they got to town to spend it.

The Black Hills trail became a busy thoroughfare as the freight trains toiled back and forth and the pilgrim wagons pushed west alone after the Indians became more friendly. What had been a rough trail when I went across

with Witcher's outfit in the spring of 1876, by the summer of 1877 had been tramped and beaten and cut with wagon tracks till it was two hundred feet wide. But there were no bridges or culverts and the creeks could be crossed at only a few places, as their banks were too steep to get the wagons down safely elsewhere. These crossings became dangerous as the traffic increased and the cattle tramped the creek beds into mudholes. On one occasion I saw a freight wagon standing almost on end, with the front wheels, buried in the mud, completely out of sight. An outfit seldom got through to Deadwood in the spring without getting stuck in crossing some creek, and often it took the whole day to get all the wagons across.

By the treaty, the Sioux had agreed to the use of the Black Hills for mining purposes while they still retained it in their reservation for a hunting ground. They also agreed to permit the government to establish three stage roads, one to start near Brule City and go up the White River, another to start near Fort Pierre, and the third from Fort Abraham Lincoln. One mile on each side of these trails was granted for grazing. These routes were to be chosen by a commission of six men, one for each road coming from the army and the governor of Dakota Territory appointing three. The governor appointed M. H. Day for the Brule City route, Joseph Allen for the Lincoln trail, and General W. H. H. Beadle for the Fort Pierre road. I do not recall the names of the army officers who were assigned to the Brule City and Lincoln trails, but Colonel Fred D. Grant was appointed to lay out the

route from Fort Pierre and he was there with General Beadle when I returned from Rapid City.

Colonel Grant got his equipment and military escort from Fort Sully, thirty-five miles up the Missouri, and Beadle insisted that the Gardners let me go with them, for he had known me in Yankton and knew that I had made several trips to the Hills besides the one with Custer's expedition.

We had a train of six wagons, each drawn by six mules, and an ambulance with four mules, and about twenty cavalrymen—just enough to stand guard at night. There was no danger of the Indians attacking the soldiers, for they had learned their lesson after the Little Big Horn conflict.

From Fort Pierre we went down the river about twenty miles to old Fort George, for at the time every one thought the North Western would build west from Tracy, Minnesota, in a very short time and would cross the Missouri at that point, as they had already done some preliminary surveying there. We struck west up Antelope Creek and over the divide to the head of War Creek. From the elevation, we could see Stony Buttes some fifteen miles to the south and White Clay Buttes about thirty-five miles to the west.

I knew that all the creeks on the south side of Bad River drained to the north and that the creeks which drained south into White River were all short—only from two to five miles long till one got near the Missouri into which the White flows. So I kept the outfit a

good distance from Bad River and on the divide between it and the White, but near enough to the heads of creeks for campers to be able to get wood in case the road should be laid out along this route.

We camped one night on the west side of White Clay Creek, on the edge of a ravine which had some brush and small timber at the bottom. The next morning I was up early and walked out of the tent in which Grant, Beadle, and I had our cots. Across the creek, on the opposite side of the ravine and about two hundred yards away, lay a big buck deer, apparently asleep. Colonel Grant had been anxious to get a shot at a deer, so I went in and called him.

He jumped up and reached for his gun without waiting to dress and I got my rifle, too, but I stood outside the tent, while Grant aimed at the deer with his rifle resting against the tent pole and Beadle, also undressed, held the tent flap back for him. Colonel Grant's shot went close enough to startle the deer but did not hit him, for he sprang up and waited a second to locate the source of the attack and I shot before he could bound away. He gave a jump or two and rolled down the side of the ravine into the timber. By that time, the whole camp was aroused and running around in various degrees of daytime attire, but Grant, in his nightshirt, drew on his cavalry boots and, guns in our hands, we started across to the deer.

The men had gone into the brush to scare him out and we waited on the bank to shoot when the deer would run. In a few minutes we heard the men: "There he is," "Here he is." "Head him off there." "Grab him by the

horns, Jerry." "I've got him." "Hold to him, Pat." "Hold him, Jerry."

Of all the racket I'd ever heard, it sounded as if the worst was down in that brush. Every one was running around telling the other fellow what to do or what not to do, like a lot of boys trying to catch a greased pig, while Colonel Grant, Beadle, and I waited up on the bank and laughed, for only the guard and myself out of the twenty-five or thirty men were dressed.

Finally we heard, "We've got him." So we went on down into the timber and found about fifteen of the soldiers holding the deer down, some by the legs, some by the horns, some by the tail, or wherever they could catch hold of him. But they had nothing to kill him with till we reached the scene, then I gave the colonel my six-shooter and he shot the deer with two or three soldiers holding him down by the horns.

We bled him, then dragged him back to camp, and by that time it was a hard-looking outfit, for the men were smeared with blood and dirt and one soldier had a bad wound in his hand. My shot had broken a hind leg and the bone had come through. This Irishman had managed to catch him by the broken leg and hang on till the others got there, getting a bad cut for his good work.

The cook prepared breakfast at once and fried pans of the meat, but I cautioned them all about eating it, as the men had run the deer through the brush till he was very hot when Grant killed him and I knew the meat would make them all sick. Beadle and I ate very little,

but the Colonel indulged more freely, though he was far outdone by the others.

The head and horns made a fine specimen and Grant took them with him.

That night I was awakened several times by the men moving around camp. The next morning, Colonel Grant said: "Zack, I guess you were right about that venison not being fit to eat. This camp was well guarded last night. I think every man but you and Beadle were on picket duty."

We moved only a few miles that day, for Grant and all the men were sick and lay in camp all day and rested. In the afternoon, Beadle and I took saddle horses and rode three or four miles down the creek on which we were camped.

Suddenly, Beadle cried, "Look there, Zack, there's a deer."

About a hundred and fifty feet away, standing beside a tree, was another black-tailed buck. I got off my horse and shot at him, killing him at once before he had run a foot. We skinned and cut off the front quarters, folding the skin back over the hind quarters which we carried back to camp with the head and horns, but the men ate very little this time, though Beadle and I had our fill, for we knew this meat had not been run and was good eating.

The head and horns of the deer Colonel Grant had shot were larger, so we salted them down in a keg and took them back to Fort Pierre.

After the men recovered from the effects of their big feed, we moved on to the Cheyenne River, then turned back toward the Missouri, going north of Bad River and following Chantier Creek to where it flows into the Missouri. This was the route Colonel Grant and General Beadle selected and one steamboat was unloaded there, about twenty-five miles up the river from Fort Pierre. But Fort Pierre had been established in the minds of the public as a starting point for the Hills and the stage route was never changed to the new landing. When the Chicago & North Western did build to the Missouri, Fort Pierre was the objective, and Pierre, which had been located on the east side of the river as soon as the first rumors of railroad building had leaked out, was the end of the road for about twenty-five years.

Colonel Grant was a very agreeable man in camp and was always approachable. He was good company and as democratic as his more famous father. Several years after our trip, I called on him in Chicago and he invited a number of friends to a dinner at the old Palmer House, where I was asked to relate the story of his deer-shooting, and how he had acquired the fine horns which hung in his office. I did not need to exaggerate it to make a good story and Grant's friends had a good deal of fun at his expense, but I think the colonel laughed most of all when I described the scene on White Clay Creek and how ridiculous he had looked in his cavalry boots and nightshirt, waiting to shoot a deer which the soldiers were holding on the ground for him.

He told his guests that he had often heard his father tell of how a coon dog had whipped his prize bulldog and he asked me to tell the story again, for, strange as it seemed, I had owned the coon dog.

It happened this way. In the fall of 1865 I had taken a load of potatoes to Petroleum Center, and, looking for a place to sell them, I had gone into a saloon or tavern which in those days was usually a part of every hotel. My countrified appearance had provoked a lot of fun from the loungers in the place when Squire Crouthers, coming in while the jokes were getting pretty rough, had taken my part and had cleaned out the room, throwing two of the rowdies through the window. Having thus become my champion, after a drink or two he became keenly interested in my errand and said he would see that I sold my potatoes. Climbing to the wagon beside me, he told me where to go, and as we rode through the streets I bragged about my dog which was with me. Like most boys, I had a dog which had gained a reputation in our neighborhood as a coon fighter, and because of his victories I had named him Perry.

In those days, dog fights and cock fights were common sports as boxing matches and prize fights are to-day. Matches could be arranged in a short time between the local victor and any dog or cock whose owner would bet on the outcome. A wolf dog in the town had been whipping every dog matched against him, but when I told Crouthers about what a fighter Perry was, he wanted to match my dog against the wolf dog, so we found the

owner of the champion and Crouthers bet twenty-five dollars on my dog.

A crowd gathered at once in the building where a pit had been built for such fights and the dogs were lifted over the board enclosure which was about three feet high. I leaned over and clapping my hands cried, "Sic him, Perry, sic him!" and the fight was on. There were snaps and snarls and biting for a few minutes till the wolf dog jumped out of the pit and ran under the raised seats around it, fighting off any attempts to catch him and return him to the pit, so we got the money.

We then turned our attention to the potatoes and got rid of them, but the fame of my dog spread rapidly and other matches were arranged. Instead of going home, Crouthers put my team in a livery stable and had me stay for another fight the following day.

My overnight absence from home had worried my father and he came after me, but learning the reason for my stay, he was considerate enough to let me enjoy the fun; so he took the team and went home, leaving me and the dog with Crouthers. Perry's fame spread as he continued to whip every dog matched against him, and in a day or two his opponent was a bulldog which had whipped every dog he had met and belonged to General U. S. Grant, who was visiting in the vicinity.

The building was full for this match, for the papers had printed stories of the victories of both dogs, and the event was drawing men from quite a distance. Old Perry lived up to his reputation, and as soon as the dogs were

put into the pit he was snapping at the head, tail, and legs of the bulldog with such speed that the later had no chance to get his jaws on him. After a few minutes of this, the bulldog backed off, growling and showing his teeth but refusing to attack, so Perry was declared the winner.

I never saw General Grant after the Union Army had received a setback, but I do not think he could have been any more angry or disgusted than he was when his pedigreed bulldog was run out of the pit by a mongrel coon dog owned by a raw country boy. He said he had been disgraced by having his dog shown up by a mongrel cur.

I had told Colonel Grant of my meeting with his father, and he said he knew the story and had heard his father tell of the incident, but it interested him to meet the same boy twelve years later on the frontier of Dakota.

CHAPTER XI

A STAGE HOLDUP

BY THE time I returned to Fort Pierre with the Grant and Beadle party, the stage line was in operation and I took charge of the supply train, hauling provisions and grain to the various stage stops and keeping the whole line under observation.

On one of these trips, we had camped on Willow Creek, at the foot of a big hill, and in the morning I discovered smoke a short distance down the creek. So after I had the outfit started up the hill, I rode down to see if the smoke was from an Indian camp or some bandit hide-out, for it was off the trail and away from the usual camping places. But instead of Indians or outlaws, I saw a lone man cooking his breakfast by holding his bacon on a stick over the fire and boiling his coffee in a tomato can. He had a small bed roll, but I could see no horses or saddle.

I walked up, for I had dismounted, and spoke to him. He said he was alone and was going through to the Hills. I asked him where his outfit was but he said he was on foot. So I told him he had a long walk ahead and I got on my horse and rode away.

Overtaking the train, I rode ahead to look out for any trouble and about noon came back to the wagons. I saw the man had caught up with them and had thrown his pack onto a wagon, but he was walking, and when we

camped for dinner he stopped, too. He asked me about herding the cattle, for he had learned from my men that the herder had taken sick and been sent back to Fort Pierre. I said no, that he was a stranger and I couldn't let him take my bulls and horse and saddle away from camp, for I might never see the horse again. I asked him what work he had been doing.

"Well, boss," he said, "for the last ten years I've been carrying the banner."

I had no idea of what he meant and asked, "What banner? Are you a soldier, or what?"

He said, "No. I guess you would call it tramping."

"That isn't much recommendation when you're asking for a job," I answered.

While we had been camped, he helped the cook and stayed with us all afternoon. When we stopped that night, he kept busy getting water and wood and doing other chores, so I told him he could take the bulls out that night to feed but could not have the horse and saddle. He drove them away, and after we had eaten, one of the boys went out to herd while he came in to eat. After his supper, he sat by the fire and sang for an hour or more. He had a fine voice and we kept him singing as the boys asked for their favorite songs. It was a beautiful night, and the memory of that evening with the moonlight flooding the prairie and the men around the camp fire stands out as one of the strong pictures in a year filled with adventure.

He brought the cattle in at daylight, and by the fol-

lowing evening I had decided that he was all right, so let him have the horse and he went on to the Hills with the outfit.

In a few days he had found a man to grubstake him and soon afterwards was lucky enough to find a prospect which they sold out for ten thousand dollars. Late that fall, he hunted me up at Fort Pierre and he was dressed like a lord. He was on his way back home to Massachusetts, where no doubt he took up his old job of "carrying the banner" as long as his money lasted.

I had taken the bull train as far as Washta Springs on a trip later in the summer, when I met M. D. Gardner with four wagons drawn by four mule teams each. He wanted me to transfer the grain I still had to the mule teams and go on into Deadwood and send the bull teams back to Fort Pierre. When I arrived in Deadwood, I found out why I had been sent in off my regular work.

There were several men there from Yankton and Sioux City, wholesale grocery, drug, and liquor salesmen, all of whom carried large sums of money, as almost all business in the Hills was carried on with currency or gold dust. These men wanted to get to Fort Pierre on the stage, but they did not want it known when they would leave Deadwood, although they had circulated the report that they would go on a certain day. They had arranged with the stage company to send me out with them to the Fourteen Mile Ranch a day or two earlier than their departure had been scheduled. I should have said a night or two earlier, for we left in the night, I driving an

empty wagon and the men meeting me on the edge of town where they had walked after dark. I was back in Deadwood the next morning, and when the regular stage came along they went on to Fort Pierre without any trouble.

It proved to be a wise precaution, for on the day following my return to Deadwood—the day when it had been reported the men would go—I rode out on the stage with some eight or ten other passengers. We left Rapid in the afternoon, seven or eight men riding inside the coach and some in front with the driver. The coach had an iron rail eight or ten inches above the top for carrying baggage, and when it got dark, as there was no baggage up there, I rolled out my bed and went to sleep. The air in the coach was stuffy, so Fred Holcomb from Yankton was riding beside the driver when we reached the Five Mile Holes about two o'clock in the morning.

As we came down the hill to cross the creek, three men rose up out of the tall grass and cried, "Halt."

The driver stopped the horses, and when the stage stopped it woke me, so I raised up to see what was the matter. There were the three men with guns in their hands and handkerchiefs tied across their faces. I took in the situation at once. My fear was that some of the men inside would start shooting, so I cried out, "Don't shoot, boys, they've got the drop on us."

We could have got one or two of them, perhaps, but they could have shot two or three of us. The bandits told us to get out and we all got down from the stage. They

took our guns and made us all sit down on the side of the road with two men guarding us while the third man searched us.

"Boys," he said, "if any one of you hain't got more than fifteen dollars, he can keep it, for I've got more than that."

When I read of all the holdups at the present time and how men are killed for a few cents, I think that the old Western bad men were gentlemen in comparison, for they would leave a man enough to buy something to eat till he could get more.

I told the robber that I had no money at all, for I worked for the stage company, so I could eat at the stage stations and ride for nothing. Besides I carried my own bed, so didn't need any money to travel.

"You're better off than I am, pardner," he said. "If you fellows with grips and trunks leave your keys, we'll not break the locks."

"If you'll let me get up," I said, "I'll help you get those straps off so you'll not have to cut them."

The straps held the boot in place over the baggage at the rear of the coach.

"All right, my friend," said one of the bandits, "you're a very accommodating cuss."

"Well," I answered, "you're not going to take the trunks with you, I hope, and if you cut the straps, we can't take them either."

"We don't want your trunks," he replied, "but we're goin' to stay here till morning. You fellows can go on

down to the ranch and come back to-morrow and get your stuff."

While I had been helping them get the trunks off, I had recognized one of the road agents as Gray, the man I had knocked down for striking the boy at Frozen Man's Creek, early in the spring. But he seemed to be avoiding me and that suited me exactly. I was afraid he would not keep far enough away, for I was sure he had recognized me too. It was a fine time to make an example of me to frighten the other passengers and at the same time settle an old score on his own terms and prevent being exposed.

As the men were climbing back into the stage, he said to me, "Seems like I've met you some place. Do you know me?"

"No, sir," I replied; "if I did, I would shake hands with you and thank you for being such a gentleman."

"Oh-h-h, no, you wouldn't," he answered.

I was certain then that it was Gray and I think he knew I had recognized him, for soon afterward he left the Hills and went to Arizona. The next year, I heard that he had been killed in a holdup. I thought I had been very lucky to escape.

The stage went on, but as soon as we were out of sight of the outlaws I got off and ran back into a gulch, where I sat and watched them go through the trunks by the light of the candles which they had taken out of the stage. I would have given a good deal to have had my Sharp's rifle then, for I could easily have got one and perhaps

all of them while they worked in the light with the trunks, but, after all, I was rather glad I didn't have it, for they had been pretty decent with us.

Holcomb had taken some milk cows out to the Hills and had sold them. He had over eight hundred dollars in his gold sack, but he was the only man who had any large amount of money. He had saved it, as he climbed down from the driver's seat, by dropping the gold sack into the cup which held the candles outside, for they had not been lighted that night as the moon was so bright. It must have been a disappointment to the robbers to find that the men they were looking for were not on the stage and they got very little money.

It took them only a few minutes to go through the trunks, then they rode away north toward Elk Creek, as I could tell by the coyotes barking at them over that way. But I lay there till morning watching the trunks. About daylight, Holcomb drove back from the stage station, on the Cheyenne about five miles east, with a team and wagon to get the trunks and whatever they had left. The stage had gone on to get the mail through on time and the men who had no baggage had gone with it.

We found all the six-shooters, but they had taken the one rifle in the party, a Winchester which belonged to a man from Omaha, who claimed he was writing for the *Bee*. He was a deadhead passenger, for the stage company expected him to advertise the advantages of the stage line in his write-up of the Hills. The road agents must have had a sense of humor, for besides the rifle, all

that was missing was two starched white shirts belonging to the reporter.

I had been afraid the Omaha man would get us all into trouble while the robbers were going through our clothes, for he talked so much and kept telling what he would have done if the rest of us had backed him up. One of the bandits did tell him to shut up, but another one said not to bother with him, for he was nothing but a windbag, and wouldn't shoot if he had a gun in each hand. He had talked brave, but when I got off the stage to go back and watch the trunks I asked him to go with me, but he refused and went on to the stage ranch. We took the next stage for Fort Pierre, and all the way in he kept kicking about the country and the stage company and how easy we had all been to let the bandits hold us up without making any resistance, till one of the passengers slapped him. When we got to Fort Pierre, Gardner offered to buy this passenger a suit of clothes, for he thought the reporter had got what he deserved.

The other passengers, except Holcomb, had been working men and had lost little in the holdup, for none of them had very much more than the fifteen dollars the robbers had let us keep. A man could often work his way in or out of the Hills with a freight outfit, and if not he had little expense except his fare on the stage or boat. He carried his own bed, which was usually one or two pair of blankets, and these with his extra clothes he rolled up in a tarpaulin with ropes or a strap to hold it together. A frying pan, a tin cup, and maybe a peach or

tomato can was all the cooking outfit he needed and often he had less than that, as I did when I rode the race horse out of the Hills in 1876.

A man could get along with just a tin can for his coffee, drinking out of it, too, and cook his bacon on a stick before the fire. But with a frying pan, he could cook his bacon and make flapjacks and gravy and live high. On the boats he could get hot water from the boilers for coffee and cook by setting the frying pan on them, while his bed could be rolled out on deck or under the boilers if it was cold or on some of the freight as I had had mine in the buggy box when the boat burned.

One morning when the men began yoking up the cattle, we found that the herder had missed several head of them, so I told the men to go on with their work and I would go after the oxen. I supposed they were lying down and the herder had missed them in the dim light of early morning, for he always came in as soon as light appeared in the east. I walked down the draw where they had been during the night but found no cattle, though I did find their trail through the dewy grass. I started after them and found they had turned back toward the trail, but I had walked several miles before I overtook them and drove them back to the trail and turned them in the direction of our camp.

I had gone a mile or so along the trail when I came to what I thought was a pilgrim camp, as the freighters called a party traveling on the roads but not hauling freight. I stopped to get something to eat and to my sur-

prise found that the cook was none other than Calamity Jane and she was getting breakfast. There were two men in camp with a wagon or two of freight apiece. As soon as I could, I pulled off my boot and found that my heel had been blistered and then chafed till the outside skin of the blister had been torn away, leaving a raw sore.

Jane was very sympathetic, dressing my heel and binding it with a piece of cloth which she tore from her clothing. Then I had breakfast with them and walked on to my camp, which I reached about noon, but I had decided it was never safe to start hunting cattle on foot and that boots were no good except for riding.

But the Indians did not give up the Hills without protest, even though the government had secured a treaty which permitted mining. The Indians claimed, and do to this day, that the treaty was never signed by three-fourths of the adult males of the tribes, as the treaty of 1868 required to make all subsequent treaties effective. Naturally there was protest and grumbling among them which might have subsided more easily had the white men confined their operations in the Hills to the removal of ore as the treaty provided. The Indians had no use for the minerals, but valued the Hills for hunting grounds and possibly, when the treaty was made, neither the government nor the Indians realized what would develop when this region was opened for mining.

Many people rushed in to prospect, but many others followed to trade and stores sprang up overnight. Farmers followed to supply milk, butter, and eggs, for such prod-

uce brought fabulous prices. These people lived in the valleys where pasture was good, and were establishing homes and laying the foundations of more permanent settlements than the miners. This alarmed the Sioux, who saw the treaty being violated—a treaty which they claimed had not been honestly made—and it was these settlers and small ranchmen who suffered most at the hands of the bands of Indians, who attacked them at every opportunity.

A man named Deffenbach was running a livery stable at Deadwood and hired out horses to parties going out to prospect. During the summer, he sent a crew of men out onto the prairie to put up hay. The Indians came upon them one day, shooting from behind trees and rocks, one being concealed where the men could not locate him though most of his shots were taking effect, as we were told by the men who escaped and brought the alarm to Deadwood. About fifty of us rode out under the leadership of Seth Bullock and found the bodies of twelve white men. Some had been killed in the camp and some at work in the hayfield. We searched the woods around and found a pile of rocks which the survivors thought had sheltered the Indian who had done the most killing. Behind the rocks we found an Indian boy, perhaps twelve years old, dead with a gun still in his hands. We took the twelve bodies back to Deadwood, leaving the dead Indians to be carried away by their friends. We made numerous attempts to identify the white men and to communicate with their relatives, but so many men used assumed names in

those wild times that many a poor mother never knew the death her son had met.

About the same time, a man named Long was making hay out on the prairie near the Bismarck-Deadwood trail. Hearing shooting, he thought some one had scared up a deer, so he took his gun and ran to the top of a hill from which he could see into the valley below. There a terrible sight met his eyes. A pilgrim wagon had been attacked by the Indians, and from his hiding place Long saw them kill the three men, a woman, and two children and subject the bodies to frightful mutilation. Frightened almost beyond ability to move, Long staggered back to his team and tried to unhitch them and ride away, but the horses became scared and broke away from him, leaving him alone on the prairie.

He began running, hardly knowing the direction he took, but was met by the Bismarck-Deadwood stage which the driver had pulled off the trail and to the east when he had heard the shooting. Long presented a startling sight, for he was a young man and had had black hair and beard, but his hair was now as white as an old man's.

These two tragedies took place about the same time and near the same part of the Hills and were blamed on the same band of Indians. Indians were much like white men, and though many of them might stay at their homes on the reservations, bands of renegades would gather in some out-of-the-way place, under the leadership of some discontented chief, and commit such outrages as I have described. Then the soldiers would go out and round up the

whole tribe which would be kept under guard at the agency till things seemed quieter or the guilty members had been punished. But the peaceful Indians fully realized the injustice that was done them, though they had been too severely subdued after the Little Big Horn battle to make any resistance.

CHAPTER XII

AT WILLOW CREEK STATION

SHORTLY after the stage was held up, the company sold the bull teams and gave me the Willow Creek station, as the first twelve miles out of Fort Pierre were hilly and required an experienced driver. I drove six horses to the first stop, where I lay over till the next day, taking care of my horses and cooking for myself. I turned the stage over to a driver who had reached my station the day before, staying in my camp while I went to Fort Pierre and returned. He went west to the next stop and stayed there till the following day.

The stages on the Overland line were operated differently, one driver traveling through several stations, where he got his meals and changed horses which were kept ready for him by a stock tender. Wild Bill Hickok had been a stock tender at one of these stations, and began his career by defending his station against a bandit gang which tried to steal his stock and hold up the stage. This encounter ended with a victory for Bill, and assured him of his ability to deal with bad men, so before long he became known as a bad man himself.

I had been driving but a short time when I had an opportunity to try out my skill as a driver. Several days of rainy weather had made the gumbo soil, which is found along the Missouri, very slippery and the roads were al-

most impassable. I had been getting through all right, but each time I came down the hill from the prairie, to get across Willow Creek, I had expected to have a spill, for the road ran down a "hogback" with a deep ravine on each side.

On this trip, M. D. Gardner, one of the owners of the stage line, was riding beside me on the driver's seat. As we started down the hill, I put on the brakes, but felt the rear end slewing off the road down the right side of the hill. I had a vision of the coach, passengers, horses, and all rolling over and over till we landed at the bottom. I realized I had but one chance of getting through, so jerked my foot off the brake and cracked my whip over the horses. They gave a spring which took one of my horses off his feet, but the chain which ran from his breast strap to the end of the tongue dragged him along, and with the other five dashing down the hill, we kept right side up.

But the danger was not over, for there was a sharp turn at the foot of the hill which I knew I could not make at the speed we were going and I think I offered a swift and silent prayer which the god of Jehu must have heard, for I never knew how I guided the frightened horses out onto the flat above the crossing and brought them to a stop. The passengers climbed out, relieved to find themselves still unharmed and at the foot of the hill, but Gardner, who had tried to take the lines away from me when I turned the horses loose, insisted that no one else could have done it and that I had taken the only way which could have saved us from a wreck.

Although I was alone at the Willow Creek station, I had plenty of company, for the Black Hills trail was a busy highway all during the spring and summer of 1877. I do not suppose a night passed when at least one outfit was not camped on the creek, for pasture was good and water was close. Outfits coming back from the hills waited here till the foreman went on to Fort Pierre to get loads rather than take the whole outfit into town where hay was scarce and expensive. And sometimes an outfit coming out from town would have trouble at the Willow Creek crossing and have to spend several days in camp there.

One such bit of hard luck to some one else gave me a very pleasing visitor and a chance to renew an old acquaintance. Captain Burleigh, who owned the steamboat which I had helped unload at Fort Abraham Lincoln in 1870, was going to try hydraulic mining on Castle Creek and the outfit which was hauling his big pump got stuck at the Willow Creek crossing, so I shared my bed and board with Burleigh till they got it across the creek. Although I had met him many times since he had nicknamed me "Custer," this was the first time I had had a chance to visit with him and we discovered that we had both come from near Oil City, Pennsylvania. I was interested in his earlier life, for he told me he had practiced medicine at Kittanning and I asked him how he had happened to get out West.

"Well, sir," said Burleigh, "that is a long story." But he went on to tell me about it.

He had been a physician at Kittanning when Abraham Lincoln had been nominated for the presidency and Bur-

leigh had worked very actively for him in the campaign which had resulted in Lincoln's election.

"After Lincoln was elected," he continued, "I went down to Washington to see him, and Senator Simon Cameron took me to the White House to see the President. He told Lincoln I had stumped the state of Pennsylvania for him and Lincoln thanked me and seemed pleased. He said he realized that it was through my efforts, and other of his good friends there, that he had carried our state, and if he could do anything for me he would be glad to do so. I told him right there that, of course, I expected something in return for my service, for I had spent considerable time and money, too, to help elect him to the high office he held. Mr. Lincoln asked me if I had anything particular in view, and I said I had, that I would like to be minister to the Court of Saint James."

"What did he say to that, captain?" I asked.

"He told me he had already decided on a man for that place and I told him right there that I expected something pretty good. Then Lincoln asked me how I would like an Indian agency. I wanted to know where it was and he said it was out in Dakota Territory. Then I asked him what the salary was and he said two thousand dollars. I told him right then and there that if I took my family out into that frontier country and only got two thousand dollars a year, that I would have to starve or steal."

I was enjoying the story immensely, for it was common talk that Burleigh had stolen enough from the Indians

and the government to make him rich, but he was not one bit embarrassed by telling me about it.

"And what did Lincoln say to that?" I asked again.

"Custer," said Burleigh, "Lincoln remarked in his dry way, 'Dr. Burleigh, if I am any judge of human nature, you won't starve.' "

The reply which Captain Burleigh said was made by Lincoln sounds very much like other anecdotes about him, and knowing Burleigh as I did, I have no doubt that the conversation took place just as he told me.

Dr. Burleigh had accepted the Indian agency and had come to Dakota bringing not only his family but his wife's family as well. Mrs. Burleigh had several sisters whom Dr. Burleigh appointed to teach in the Indian school, and his two sons, young boys about ten or twelve years old, he had on the pay roll at fifty dollars a month each, to catch gophers. What damage gophers could do on an Indian reservation which was open prairie without fifty acres cultivated on the whole reservation I cannot tell, and it seems that the Indian Department did not ask, for the arrangement lasted for several years. So it was no wonder that Burleigh chose later to resign as agent; he had the reputation of getting what he went after.

It was told in Dakota that Burleigh had an old friend whom he wanted President Johnson to appoint as a judge in Dakota Territory. The President asked Burleigh if the man had any qualifications for the office, how he ranked as a lawyer, and if he was competent to serve as a judge. Burleigh replied that he didn't know anything about his

friend's ability as a lawyer, but one thing he did know, "the man was hell on equity," and the lawyer was appointed.

But conditions at the agency had finally become so bad that the government appointed a commission to investigate, and as usual with such commissions, this one was made up of men from back East who knew nothing of the West or of Indians. Dr. Burleigh received information that such a commission was coming and he arranged with a friend and drinking chum of his, who was interpreter at the Cheyenne Agency, to meet them at Yankton. This Fielder did and was a passenger on the same stage—by accident, of course—which took them to the Yankton Agency.

As the stage met Indians along the road, Fielder was talking to them in Indian and generally displaying so much knowledge of agency affairs that the commission were impressed and asked him if he could act as their interpreter, for naturally they did not want to use the one located at the agency. Fielder said he could talk and understand the Sioux language well, for he was interpreter for the Cheyennes, but he was due back at the agency. However they promised to arrange for the extension of his vacation and he was persuaded to stay with them. At the Yankton agency, he avoided the employees and of course pretended no acquaintance with Burleigh, who failed to recognize Fielder as well.

The commission then sent out on the reservation for the Indians to come in and tell what their complaints were

and everything moved in regular order. When it came time for the Indians to tell their grievances, one old chief stood up and talked at length. His voice and gestures showed a great deal of emotion and it was easy to tell he was "mad all over." He told how Burleigh had cheated them out of their beef by bringing a herd of cattle in from the hills on one side and after weighing them and getting a receipt from the Indians, he had run them back into the hills; then, on another issue day, the same cattle were run in again from the hills on the other side and weighed and so on. He pointed to the hills to the east and to the west and used Burleigh's name several times. Then he sat down and the commission asked Fielder to interpret it.

Fielder said the old chief had said that Burleigh was a fine man, that he was the best agent the Great Father had ever sent out to them, that he weighed out cattle for them every few days, and if he were taken away the Indians would all leave the agency and go back to the hills, and they would come from the east and from the west and kill all the white settlers and take the white men's cattle, for Burleigh was the Indians' friend and good father. So the commission went back to Washington and exonerated Burleigh from all charges.

But Burleigh realized that he had gone as far as he could, so he resigned and had all his accounts checked over and was given receipts by the government and released from all obligations. Then Major Gassman took the agency, and, in checking over the accounts, he discovered that Burleigh had helped himself to nearly a half-million.

But there was no law by which he could be punished and the government had to content itself by issuing a pamphlet disclosing his transactions, which was distributed over the country. But Burleigh clapped his hand on his pocket and exclaimed, "To hell with their pamphlet! I've got the mun."

After leaving the agency, Burleigh built up a ranch on Bonhomme Island and operated a flour mill on the east bank of the Missouri, where he was known as one of the richest men in the territory. With all his tricks, he was a capable man and he decided he wanted to go to Congress as a delegate from Dakota. When the Republicans met for their convention, Burleigh asked for the indorsement, which they refused. He then went to the Democratic convention, where he received the same treatment, although he informed both groups that they might as well nominate him, for he was going to be the next delegate, but preferred to be nominated by a regular party.

Farmers and settlers in Dakota then were gathered in the southeastern part around Yankton and had had hard times for several seasons. Droughts, grasshoppers, and prairie fires had defied the conversion of the prairie into farms and were more to be feared than the Indians. In the fall, before election day, Burleigh loaded four-horse teams with flour and sent them through the country, leaving several sacks at each home and his men told the settlers:

"Burleigh knows you people have lost your crops and he is sending you a little present, yes, the same Burleigh

who is running for Congress. Sure, he's a good fellow; he's a fine man."

Other men were sent out with herds of cattle which they distributed to be killed and divided in a settlement and they, too, praised Dr. Burleigh. When election day came and the results came in, Burleigh had more votes than the other two candidates together and he did make a splendid representative, for although a delegate could not vote, Burleigh's connection with Pennsylvania and Senator Cameron and other leading Republican politicians of the East secured more legislation for Dakota Territory than the others could have done.

Most of Burleigh's political activities had occurred before I had met him, but during his stay on Willow Creek he told me many anecdotes from his life, and I learned more the same fall when I boarded with a man who had been boss farmer at the agency while Burleigh had been in charge there. He was a conspicuous figure along the Missouri for twenty years and was active in the territorial and state development. He owned and operated several steamboats on the Missouri and went into the Black Hills when mining was resumed in 1877. Later he moved to Montana, where he continued his political career though without notable success.

The stage line had not been the success, financially, that the owners had expected and the several partners had disagreed over it during the summer.

About the first of September, Joe Kirley, whom I had known in Yankton since 1872, stopped at my camp as he

was returning from the Hills and asked me what was the trouble with the stage line. I knew of no trouble and asked him what he meant. He said he had met Adams and French driving the stage horses and that they had taken the horses away from some of the stations. The Gardners and the stage company owed me nearly five hundred dollars and I did not intend to be left holding the sack, so as soon as Kirley left me I got ready to receive them.

I put the horses in the stable and fastened and locked a chain across the doorway. The shack I locked, and, taking my six-shooter and old Sharp's, went down to the creek, where I concealed myself below the bank. In an hour or two the party came to my station to take the horses I had been driving. I called to them and asked French if he had the money to pay me what I had coming from the company. He said he knew nothing about my claim and that the Gardners would have to settle with me.

"Now, French," I said, "you know that the Gardners owe me for handling the bull outfit, but the stage company have been owing me ever since they started the line and I am going to keep these horses till I get my money. The horses are locked up and the first man who tries to take them out will get a bullet through him."

They argued with me awhile, but I refused to leave the protection of the creek bank or to give up the horses and they left.

That night, after dark, I took my six horses and rode in to Fort Pierre where I found Gardner and told him what French and Adams were doing. The next morning, he

sent George Weston with me to follow the bunch of horses and find out what was being done with them. Weston and I took a light buggy and a span of little mules that did not weigh over seven hundred pounds apiece. We left Fort Pierre at ten minutes after noon and drove forty-five miles before stopping for supper. We fed and watered the mules and let them rest for a couple of hours, then drove thirty miles till we met a bull train and stopped in their camp for something to eat. The mules had a good feed and a chance to roll, and on again into the night we went, to Piñon Springs, which we reached about five o'clock in the morning, having covered the one hundred miles in less than seventeen hours, for the little mules loped along and always ran down the hills.

We found French and Adams at Piñon Springs with the stage horses, and soon after we arrived, Van Tassell, the other partner in the stage line, who had the contract for carrying the mail, got in from Deadwood. When the stage and mail had failed to get in, he had started to find why it was delayed and at the first station east of Rapid he had learned that the horses were being pulled off, so he had come on east looking for them. He lost no time when he arrived, for he jumped from the buggy with his gun in his hand and, covering Adams and French with his Colt's .45, he told them to hit the trail, that they had no right to interfere with the mail, and for them to "git." And they got, leaving at once for Rapid City with the team they had been driving.

It worked out well for Van Tassell, for one of the pas-

sengers on the stage which he met at Piñon Springs was a deputy United States attorney, a half-brother of Judge Shannon, who was chief justice of the territory. Van Tassell turned the mail and stage line property over to him and Shannon was able to make satisfactory explanations to the Post Office Department, so that Van Tassell had no trouble over failing to keep his contract. Van Tassell sent Weston with the property which Shannon was taking to keep informed as to its disposal, while he and I took the little mule team and drove ahead to the Cheyenne River station where we slept while the mules rested.

When the outfit came up, they found no horses and went on, but we passed them before they reached Washta Springs and they found no horses at that station either. But after the stage had gone west to Rapid, we were able to locate the driver for the Washta station and he rounded up his stock by the time the driver from Cheyenne station arrived with his horses. There were now twenty-eight head in the bunch, which Van Tassell turned over to me to take back to Fort Pierre, and he went on toward Rapid. In a short time George Weston came back with the little mule team and I then had George Wolfe, George Buker, and George Weston with me.

We did not follow the trail, but turned down Box Elder Creek to the Cheyenne and kept several miles south of the trail. We had an old wagon for our beds, but we were very short of provisions and could not get any from freighters, as we could have done if we stayed on the trail. The second day we reached the Cheyenne, and about

noon were struck by the worst hailstorm I have ever seen. Some stones were seven inches around and the horses were pounded terribly, but the men got some protection by crawling under the wagon.

There we camped till the following day, then went on. But about noon we discovered that a light wagon was following us. I took my rifle and sent a few shots near them and they fell back a little but soon were nearing us again.

"They might be Indians," I told the boys, "and I had better scare them back a little." So I shot in their direction again.

They tried to communicate with us, but we kept them at a distance till we were within twenty miles of Fort Pierre, where we camped for the night on Lance Creek. But after dark, we slipped away and moved over to Willow Creek, about five miles out from town. Leaving Buker with the horses, Weston, Wolfe, and I walked in to town to get something to eat, for we had had nothing for five days except the game we had killed. We had plenty of deer and antelope meat and lots of salt, but a fellow gets tired of an all-meat diet after two or three days.

Another George was now mixed up in my "horse stealing," for I got George Harris and another man to take some grub out to Buker and send him in while they took the horses down the river about fifteen miles to the Big Bend and swam them across to the east side.

The next day, the three men who had been following us came in and arrested us for stealing twenty-eight head of horses and harness, on warrants which had been sworn

out by Adams and French at Rapid City. Two of them, Bill Smith and Bill Steele, were deputy United States marshals, and the other, Tommy New, had come from Minnesota with Adams and was sent along to identify the horses.

We knew that we had committed no crime and that we had been arrested only to get the horses into the possession of Adams and French, for they expected to stop us before we had crossed the Cheyenne River. We made no attempt to avoid arrest, however, and when we could not persuade the officers to release us, we started back with them. But New was sore about missing the horses and began abusing us as soon as we left Fort Pierre. I told him I would not take such abuse if I were not a prisoner, and Smith, whom I had known well in Rapid City, must have thought New was wrong, for he said he would release me long enough for us to settle our quarrel. So we got out of the wagon and had it out, settling it to my satisfaction if not to New's.

Years later, New and I were both serving in the state legislature of South Dakota and were good friends. One day, he called me to a window and asked me to point out the place where we had had our fight in 1877, for from the capitol building at Pierre we had a fine view across the Missouri to the flat and the hills beyond and I pointed out the exact location. I refer to this later incident because it shows the opportunity which the West offered and the character of the men who developed it. Two young men, one a blacksmith and the other a stage driver, settled their

dispute with their fists, and thirty-four years later the same men were both serving their state and viewed the scene of their early trouble from the window of a splendid capitol.

At one place on the road we saw some animal off on the prairie four or five hundred yards, and thought it was a buffalo wolf. I told Smith I would like to take a shot at it if he would let me have my rifle, for of course the officers had taken our guns away from us. I got down from the wagon and shot. I knew I had hit him, for he went down at the first shot. We drove over to the body and, instead of a buffalo wolf, there lay a big mountain lion, about the size of an African panther or tiger. I was used to pacing distance on the survey, and I paced back to the place from which I had aimed and found it was four hundred and forty paces or thirteen hundred, twenty feet. We skinned him and Smith paid me ten dollars for the hide, which we salted as soon as we met a bull outfit. Although I had my gun and could easily have taken the other boys and sent the officers on their way, the idea never occurred to me and Smith had known I could be trusted when he gave me the rifle. I wonder how many officers to-day would dare take such chances with their prisoners.

We had not gone far after shooting the mountain lion when we met M. H. Day, a prominent citizen of Yankton. Of course, by then, the trouble with the stage line and the stopping of the mail was well known in the Hills as well as the trip of the deputy sheriffs to arrest us. When Day saw who were in our party, he stopped to talk to us

and asked to talk to me, alone. Teams on the road seldom met without stopping, for it was customary, when they met, to talk about the roads and other matters of common interest. Such conversations took the place of the daily paper and the telephone of to-day.

Day told me that we were foolish for going back with Smith and Steele, for they had no jurisdiction outside of Pennington County, being only deputy sheriffs and not deputy United States marshals as they had claimed to us they were. He said we were on the Sioux Reservation and that no one but a federal officer had any authority there. But I said we could not do anything, for they had our guns.

"Now, Zack," he replied, "you know every bullwhacker on the trail and they are all your friends, so you stop the next train you meet and refuse to go further."

An hour or so later, we met V. P. Shaun's bull train and I suggested that we stop for dinner, as it was a long way to the next water hole and we might not find an outfit in camp there. Shaun was a Kentuckian, six feet, four inches tall and a true Southerner in manner—a most likable man and a good friend of mine, so I thought this was the time to try my plan if I was going to attempt it. After dinner I talked to Shaun about the outfit and freighting and we strolled away to one side of the camp, where I told him what Day had told me and he thought it would be a good joke to play on Smith and Steele.

He called his men and said, "If you fellows want to see some fun, come with me."

We all walked across the road to where Steele and Smith were getting ready to leave. Then I told Smith that I thought we had gone far enough with them and that we were going back, for they had no authority to arrest us on the reservation. They said they knew their business and that we were going to Rapid City if they had to put irons on us. But Shaun and his men pulled their guns and Shaun told the deputy sheriffs to give us our guns and everything else that belonged to us and for them to hit the trail. He said if they didn't, he would turn his men loose on them and when they got through there wouldn't be much sheriff to take back. But I told them to put the guns up, for there was no need of any shooting, but that we were going back to Fort Pierre with Shaun.

"I could tell that Day was putting you up to something," Smith said, "so you can have your guns and go back, but we'll get you if you ever come into the Hills again."

When they saw they could not scare us, they tried to trap us and offered us twenty-five dollars apiece if we would go to Rapid with them. They wanted to get us across the Cheyenne River, but I knew we would then be in Pennington County and the warrants would be good and we could go to grass for our twenty-five dollars. So we did not propose to be trapped when we could see the trap and we left them and returned to Fort Pierre.

By the time we returned, Harris had the horses safely hidden on the east side of the Missouri. When the different members of the stage company met in Deadwood

to arrange a settlement, Adams and French agreed to turn over all the property in their hands to Shannon as receiver. All the bills against the stage company were filed and allowed, and the twenty-eight horses we had kept were turned over as part of the company property. This property was then sold at auction and the men were all paid.

The Gardners and Van Tassell allowed me more than I had expected to get, although it was no more than was due me. I took my pay in horses and harness, getting eight head when they were auctioned off. I put my horses on the steamboat and returned to Yankton where I spent the winter, doing some freighting, but traded my horses for mules, as the mules were better for hauling or railroading which I intended to take up in the spring.

CHAPTER XIII

NEW SETTLEMENTS

THE year 1877 had seen rapid development throughout Dakota Territory. The Black Hills had been the objective for thousands of miners and settlers from all parts of the United States, and many of them, either finding the last part of the trail too rough or else going into the Hills to be disappointed and leaving, settled along the Missouri, the James, and the Vermilion rivers. Freight outfits stretched along the trails to the Hills from Bismarck, Cheyenne, Sidney, Yankton, and Fort Pierre. The trails which the government had laid out became busy highways, and the activity in the Hills was reflected over the whole territory, for it gave the settlers a good market for their produce as well as providing work in transportation and building.

Steamboats went up and down the Missouri, loaded with freight for the Hills and for settlements along the river from where it was hauled to inland stores and mining camps. And the same freight wagons came back to the river points loaded with grain and farm produce from the settlements and with timber or rich ore from the Hills. The railroads followed the settlement and pushed west into Dakota from Minnesota and Iowa, providing work for men and teams and easier access into the rich, fertile

valleys east of the Missouri, which were soon dotted with farms and small towns.

But in the northern part of the territory there was a distinct difference in the class of settlers and in the nature of development, for the railroads held large tracts of land, and farms were operated on an immense scale which did not encourage settlement, as the filing on homesteads had done in the southern section.

Before the opening of the Black Hills, there had been little market for anything the settlers could produce. I know one man who hauled fifty bushels of grain fifty miles to Yankton with an ox team and then could not dispose of it till my brother and I bought it for five dollars to help him. We were able to trade it to the man with whom we boarded and he fed it to his hogs. The farmer had threshed it out by hand and had been on the road four days before he sold the grain. Then it took him fully three days to reach home again with only five dollars to buy what he could not raise for his winter's provisions. This was but one case, yet it gives some idea of the hardships which the early homesteaders had to meet and what little incentive there was to make homes and turn the prairies into farms.

Much of this was overcome when the mines were opened and the population increased so rapidly, providing markets for farm produce and offering a chance to work in transporting it.

Country newspapers were soon established which helped the homesteaders to realize that each family was

one unit of a great company working for the same end and promoted coöperation and unity of purpose. The first of such papers to be published in Dakota was issued by a grand old man, now nearing the century mark, for he was born in 1830. What changes in our country he has seen!

F. M. Ziebach had worked on a newspaper in Madison, Wisconsin, in 1855, but had returned to his home in Pennsylvania; then the lure of the West called him back again. He made the trip by boat down the Ohio River to St. Louis and then up the Missouri to the western edge of settlement in the northwest, bringing his printing press with him.

After short stops at Sergeant Bluff and Sioux City, which then were little more than wood yards which furnished fuel to the steamboats carrying supplies to the army posts and Indian agencies on the upper Missouri, he moved to Yankton in 1861, and issued the first number of the *Dakotan* on June 6th. This paper has continued publication since that date, but is now called the *Yankton Press and Dakotan.*

The massacre of Minnesota settlers in 1862 alarmed all the Western settlements, and the Dakota militia was organized for protection against the Indians who were driven into Dakota by the United States soldiers and the Minnesota militia. Mr. Ziebach was elected captain of Company A, and supervised the erection of a stockade four hundred feet square, which gave refuge and security to the families of settlers who had not joined in the wild

stampede which practically depopulated nearly all other parts of the territory.

I became acquainted with Ziebach during my first visit to Yankton in 1870, and it has been my pleasure to count him among my closest friends since that time.

A trip which I made to Cheyenne Agency in February, 1878, took me through some of these new settlements where I met some interesting and unique characters.

George Smith, a young man from Yankton, and I had freight to be hauled to the agency for the trader there, as the boats would not be able to go up the river for several weeks. My brother Will thought it would be a good time to take a load of goods to Fort Sully, as we would go by that post, reaching it about the time the soldiers would be paid, and he took a load of butter, eggs, preserves, and other sweetmeats which he knew would sell quickly at the post. But he was not ready when we were, so we went on ahead, but promised to lay over one day at Scotland till he overtook us.

Scotland was then only a country post office, thirty miles north of Yankton, with a small general store and a hotel run by General Campbell, a veteran of the Mexican War. He was a man of ability and education above the usual homesteader; and what turn of fate had brought him to pioneer on the prairies I never knew, but he was one of the most interesting men I ever met and one of the unique characters we met on the trip. He was asked one time where he got the title of general and replied with unusual feeling, "Damn it, read the history of your country and

you'll know who I am," for he had been wounded in one of the important engagements in Mexico. Mrs. Campbell was as odd as her husband and was very deaf, so could not resent it when he referred to her without meaning any disrespect, as "My old hen."

The day we were waiting there, another amusing character appeared. Johnny Morgan lived about twenty miles northwest and came to see the general, wanting to go to work. Campbell asked him if he could drive mules and he said he guessed he could as he had seen his cousin drive mules in Canada. So Campbell gave him a mule team and the running gear of a wagon and told him to go down on the creek and get a load of wood. But in an hour or so we saw him coming back on foot, so went to the door to find out the trouble. When he saw us, he stopped and beckoned us to come to him, and when we were within speaking distance he said, very calmly, "Mr. Campbell, it's the awfullest sight you ever saw."

We asked what was so bad and what had become of the mules, but he only repeated, "It's the awfullest sight you ever saw."

We could see his tracks and those of the team and wagon in the light snow which had been falling all day and we hurried toward the creek, but the tracks led off to a little gulch which was narrow at the head. We looked over the edge and there lay the mules, harness and all, with the wagon on top of them. Campbell, Smith, and I had left Johnny behind, and before he arrived we were at work getting the mules out.

Johnny came up to the scene and as slowly as before inquired, "Mr. Campbell, ain't it the awfullest sight you ever saw?" but made no attempt to help us.

So Campbell named him "Johnny Come Slowly" and he was known by that nickname as long as he lived in that country.

Will Sutley got in that night with a new wagon and a team of horses. But he had not greased his wagon before using it and one wheel had stuck till the thimble was worn out. Smith was a good carpenter by trade, so we stayed in Scotland another day while he repaired the wagon. That was the beginning of Will's mishaps, for the whole trip was marked by just such troubles for him.

When we got ready to go, Campbell told Johnny that he had better go with us, as it was a good chance for him to get a ride home, and gave him a sack of flour, some sugar, and coffee, though Campbell must have decided he could not use him for work.

We camped at Morgan's place the night of the day we left Scotland. He had a comfortable house, small as were most of the homestead houses, and a good barn. He and his wife had prepared for blizzards by digging a tunnel from the cellar of their house to the stable.

While we were feeding our stock that evening, we heard a commotion at the other end of the shed, and soon Johnny appeared and motioned to us for silence. Then he whispered:

"Come on and see. I'm having fun with Sarah."

We walked up to where we could see Mrs. Morgan,

who was trying to milk the cow. They had crowded their stock to make room for ours, and an ox in the same stall would throw his head around to the side which would make the cow jump back and then Sarah would get up and beat the cow with the milk stool. When everything was quiet and she had resumed milking, Johnny would strike at the ox's head, making him dodge again, scaring the cow. We all stood there laughing till Sarah discovered us and, throwing down the stool, grabbed the milk pail and went to the house.

We finished caring for our mules and then went through the tunnel to the cellar, but the door seemed to be fastened above, so I offered to go and open it. We had called Sarah several times but had received no answer. I tried the door, but found it would not open, so I peered in through the window, and there on the cellar door sat two-hundred-pound Sarah, calmly knitting. After I had coaxed her for fifteen or twenty minutes and had made all kinds of promises as to our good behavior in the future, she relented and let us in.

We went on to the Missouri River and camped at the mouth of Crow Creek, opposite the Brûlé Agency, near a half-breed named Johnny Florry. He would have been a rival of Baron Münchausen if he had been educated, but was wasting his ability on Indians and freighters. He hung around our camp most of the time and entertained us with his past experiences. He said he had gone back to visit his father in Nebraska and the neighbors had come in such crowds, when they heard he was at home, that the road

was blocked and they tore down the fences and went across the fields to see him. His father, he said, was the richest man in Nebraska and had the biggest house in the state. I knew the elder Florry and that he lived in a log house no larger than that of other Indians and squaw men, and I asked Johnny how big the house was

"I don't know how many rooms it has," said he, "but it's an awful big house. Why, the kitchen alone is three stories high."

We stayed in camp here while Will went over to the agency to see about selling some of his goods, and while he was gone, an Indian came to our camp and wanted to trade a mule for one of Will's horses, an unusually large one which we had named Governor, after Governor Pennington, a very large man. Smith and I told him to go get his mule and he returned with a fine four-year-old mule which had never been hitched up. He had probably stolen it from some freighter or homesteader, for mules were uncommon among the Indians.

In about half an hour, this Indian returned with another young mule and wanted to trade for the wagon, Will's new one. The wagon had cost perhaps fifty dollars and the mule was worth more than a hundred, so we traded. In fact, I later paid Will more than a hundred dollars for the mule. But when he returned to camp, there were his goods all piled on the ground and himself the owner of one horse and two unbroken mules which were too small for the harness he had. He swore till he tired himself out, while we laughed at him and tried to

tell him we had made a good bargain for him, but he was mad most of the time during the remainder of the trip.

During the afternoon, Bill Walpole and John Walsh with their freight outfits, returning from Deadwood, stopped at our camp and Walsh called to his outfit to pull off the road. It was still early in the afternoon, but he said he was going to camp right there and hear Will Sutley tell stories. So we had a fine visit that night, telling them the news from Yankton and getting news from the Black Hills from them, and in the evening Johnny Florry reached new flights of fancy in his efforts to entertain his larger audience.

Walsh and Walpole had a number of mules running loose, as their wagons were empty, so we got harness from them for Will's mules and sent his harness back to Yankton. Florry took his goods up to the Crow Creek Agency and there we got another wagon to finish the trip. I took the young mules to drive with mine and gave Will a team that was broken to hauling, but in a day or two he said I was driving his mules too hard and he took them back. He drove them one day, and that night as we were feeding the teams I heard a noise in the stall, where Will's mules were, that sounded as if the whole stable were being torn down.

These stables were usually made of cottonwood poles with willows on top, then hay and brush covered with dirt, and they were not much higher than a man's head. I ran to find the trouble and found Will stabbing the mule's flanks with a pitchfork while the mule was kicking to the

roof of the stable. Will's face was scratched and bruised and I asked him what had happened.

"That damned Injun kicked me," he answered.

"In the face?" I asked.

"No," he replied, "but he sent me headfirst against the logs."

I had to laugh and that made him madder than ever, and the next day he gave me his mules to drive again. By morning, his face was black and blue and he was a comical sight in spite of his injuries.

We stopped at noon at the Narcelle Ranch, and it was then the old man wanted me to become his son-in-law and business manager. The other boys had a lot of fun over that at my expense, pointing out to me the advantages of such an arrangement.

Nothing unusual happened after leaving Narcelle's till we came to Okobojo Hill, which we had to descend from the prairie to the river bench. Smith and I were ahead and Will was driving his own mules, for he had taken them back again after a day or so. We had gone down the hill and stopped to take off the rough locks—chains looped around the rim of the rear wheel and hooked to the front end which kept the wheel from turning and pulled the chain against the ground. We heard Will shouting and looked back up the hill to see his team coming down on the run, while he trundled along behind, looking much like a big brown bear in his heavy buffalo overcoat and trying to keep upon his feet down the steep incline.

"Head—my—mules," he shouted. *"Head—my—mules."*

We ran back, waving our arms and shouting at them to turn them from the road and they ran off to one side into the brush and stopped. How anything on the wagon escaped destruction I could never tell, for, as I said above, eggs, glass jars of fruit, and such things made up his load, but they were so well packed, nothing was hurt.

Will stayed at Fort Sully, where he found ready sale for his goods, and Smith and I went on to the Cheyenne Agency, at that time located about eighty miles above the post and on the west side of the river. We reached the crossing early in the morning and met an army ambulance with four mules, driven by a half-breed. I asked him how the ice was.

"Ice good, ice hard," he said.

However, I would not risk the loads till I had gone across. Robb, the post trader, had agreed to receive the goods on the east side of the river if the crossing was bad and to deduct twenty-five cents a hundred, which would have amounted to about twenty-five dollars less to me. I would not risk the loss of one mule or a wagon for that much, but I found the ice in fair condition and decided to take the loads across, although I took the precaution of unloading half from each wagon and making more trips.

We unhitched the mules and tied a picket rope to the wagon, then hitched one mule to the rope about fifty feet ahead. We laid down planks, which we got at the agency, for the wagon to run on and keep the wheels from cutting

through the ice. When the wheels rolled off one pair of planks, they were taken up and laid ahead of the pair on which the wagon was standing. In this way, we got all the loads across and our wagons back on the east side of the river without losing any of our outfit, but it had taken Smith and me all day and I had hired another man to help us load and unload.

As we were returning to the east side with our last empty wagon, the ambulance which had crossed in the morning drove up to the crossing. Two army officers were riding horseback and inside the ambulance was a lady, the wife of one of the men. These army ambulances were used as coaches and were covered with canvas, having curtains which could be strapped down over the sides to keep out the cold and wind, but these curtains could not be unfastened from the inside except with the greatest difficulty.

The officers asked me how the ice was and I said it was pretty bad and not safe to drive across that night, for the sun had been warm and the ice had been melting all day.

They rode up and down the bank for a short distance looking at the ice and then motioned the driver to go on. I was on the bank as he drove toward the river, and I told him to keep close to the bank till he got up the river about a half mile and then to follow our tracks across. The bank was steep where the trail led down to the ice and I had used a rough lock all day to let my wagons down the bank. I told the driver I would give him a chain to rough-lock the ambulance wheels and he stopped to put it on.

The lieutenant came riding back and asked why he did

not come on. The half-breed said he had stopped for the chain, as I had told him he ought to rough-lock to go down the bank. The lieutenant rode on and told him to follow and asked him:

"Who are you taking orders from, me or that freighter?"

The driver mounted to his seat and started his mules. A ranchman had ridden up and he got off his horse, standing there with us to watch them get across.

"That ice is dangerous," remarked the ranchman, and we explained that we had told the officers about it.

The mules went down the bank and onto the ice while the coach was coming down the bank, but the brakes did not hold it and the coach crowded onto the mules, sending them seventy-five or eighty feet from the bank before they could be brought to a stop to turn up the river along our trail.

We heard a crackling and groaning and then a horrible scene met our eyes. The ice for about forty feet square dropped into the river, carrying the ambulance and the wheel mules out of sight in the muddy water which rolled and surged around the opening and over the helpless victims.

The poor woman gave one terrified scream as the water rolled into the coach, but the half-breed made no effort to jump or escape. He seemed too terrified for thought or motion and sat in the driver's seat while the icy water swept around and carried him out of sight.

The lead mules had held their footing on the opposite

side of the hole for a moment, but were dragged into the water by the other team, and as they hit the bottom they seemed to spring up, so that their ears showed above the surface for a moment and we heard them snorting. This happened two or three times before they disappeared.

The lieutenant and his companion had ridden back at the first sound of cracking ice and he had flung himself off his horse in desperation. He tried to dash into the yawning pool and would have thrown himself into its waters if we had not held him back. I drew my gun and emptied the chambers with shots into the air to attract the attention of the men at the agency and he tried to grab the gun from me.

With their glasses, the soldiers, stationed at the agency, soon discovered what had happened and came over as soon as they could, but we had already fastened two chains together and dropped them into the river. The big hook at the end was caught into something by the time the soldiers arrived and we pulled up the lead mules, for the hook had caught in the chain on their harness. We cut the harness loose and let the mules drop back into the river, but kept hold of the harness by which we pulled the wheel team to the surface and cut them loose to drop back also, then pulled out the ambulance till we could cut the canvas and recover the body. But there was no trace of the poor half-breed driver and his body was not found till late in the spring, for he had worn a heavy buffalo coat which held the body down till the water became warm and it floated to the surface.

We put the body of the poor young woman in the box of my wagon and accompanied by several officers went down to Fort Sully. The lieutenant all but collapsed from his grief and self-accusation and I could not scold or condemn him, although I thought that he had virtually drowned his wife by not taking our advice. But it seems that young people like to have their own way and will not listen to older and more experienced men and women, till they learn by sad results that they are wrong.

Afterward the young man said he had been too headstrong, and if he had listened to us, freighters who had been on the river all day, the tragedy would not have occurred.

At the agency we had loaded our wagons with dried hides, and at Fort Sully we were joined by Will Sutley, who had disposed of his goods to the post trader, except what he had sold soon after his arrival. By the time we reached the hill where Will's mules had run away, the river did break up and we made plans to go to Fort Pierre where we knew a steamboat had been frozen in during the winter and would be going to Yankton as soon as the ice had run out.

At Fort Pierre, we transferred the hides to the boat which was going down after freight and was glad to take them for ten cents each, giving us a nice profit, as we were getting thirty-five cents apiece to deliver them to Yankton, and with our now empty wagons we could make better time and save expenses on the road.

We left the wagon we had borrowed at Crow Creek and

got Will's other horse, which we traded for five Indian ponies, for the Sioux were always anxious to get American horses. I paid Will two hundred fifty dollars for the span of mules and he still had the five ponies in exchange for an outfit that had not cost him over one hundred fifty dollars. But he complained all during the trip about us trading off his property.

CHAPTER XIV

AN APRIL BLIZZARD

As the settlement spread out from the railroad and river points, stage and mail lines were established which soon linked the whole territory with the older towns and slowly but gradually pushed back the frontier.

The mail contracts were given to the lowest bidder by the government and often one man would have contracts for a number of these star routes, as they were called. He would then advertise for bids on them and again give them to the lowest bidder in the different sections, usually making a nice profit for himself by handling them. One of the successful bidders was J. B. Colgrove of Sedalia, Missouri, and during the next few years I was frequently sent by him to look after these routes and to interview the local bidders, when contracts were to be given.

One such trip in the spring of 1878 took me to the Rosebud Agency, or, as it was commonly called, the Spotted Tail Agency, from the chief whose bands lived on that reservation.

I got a span of little mules and an Indian harness which cost me fifteen dollars. The buggy cost twenty-five dollars and I had paid eighty dollars for the mules, so was ready to travel but with not much expense. I drove up the river about seventy-five miles to a point opposite Fort Randall which was on the west side of the Missouri.

The wind was blowing when I reached the landing and made the crossing impossible, for me at least, so I lay there waiting for the wind to go down, as I wanted to set the buggy on the yawl and let the mules swim behind the boat. While I waited, four soldiers came down to the landing and wanted to get across to the post. I told them it was dangerous to attempt it in the rough water, but they kept shouting until two soldiers from the fort came over with the boat.

A little German tailor had been working at the post, but had gone down to Yankton and had returned with me. He decided to go across with the soldiers, and as I untied the boat and pushed it from the bank, I tied the rope around the little tailor who sat in the front end, telling him to hang to the rope if the boat upset. The soldiers had on their heavy overcoats and cartridge belts and carried their guns, so the boat was rather heavily loaded with the seven men.

Two other men were waiting like me to cross and we stood and watched them fighting their way across the heavy waves. Several times we thought they would not be able to reach the other side, but they had nearly made the west bank when I saw them all in the water, as I followed their progress with a field glass. I pulled out my six-shooter and began firing to attract the attention of the soldiers at the fort, and soon several of them came running down to the river, took another boat, and rowed down the river after the yawl. Soon I could see more soldiers walking along the shore and

I think the entire garrison came down to the river bank.

The wind went down during the night, and in the morning I got a man to take me across to the fort, where we learned that one of the soldiers who had brought the boat and the little tailor were the only ones who had been saved. These two had hung to the rope after the boat was upset, but the others could do nothing to save themselves, dressed as they were in their heavy coats and belts. They had tried to swim to shore, but the two who could not swim had clung to the boat and were saved.

We went back with the yawl to get my buggy and mules and crossed to the post without any trouble. I drove out west about a hundred miles to the agency and let the mail contract to Charley Tackett, a son-in-law of Spotted Tail, then started back to Yankton.

But on Antelope Creek I met an Indian who took a fancy to my little mules and buggy and he wanted to trade me ponies for them. After some discussion, we agreed on a trade and I got eight ponies and a saddle. I did not want to try to lead the ponies behind the boat as I had the little mules, so decided to go south and cross the Missouri at Niobrara, Nebraska, where there was a ferry. After our trade, I rode down Ponca Creek and stopped the first night with an Indian family.

I had not gone far the next morning, when I was overtaken by three Indian police, who took me and my ponies back to the agency. As soon as we had traded, the Indian had gone to the agency with the mules and buggy, for he

was very proud of them, and some of the employees had reported it to the agent, who sent the police to see that he had not stolen them or done me any injury. The agent advised me to trade back for my mules and buggy, for he said the Indian had no use for them and would soon find out he had been cheated. Then he would go out and steal more horses from some white man and there would be trouble.

I said that was all right if he saw it that way and I would trade back, but would keep the saddle for the time I had lost in coming back to the agency. So I took the mules and began my return to Yankton a second time, but went toward Niobrara, for I expected to make another trade before I got off the reservation, and meant to make sure this time that I could get off before the police could reach me. On Kehapawha Creek, I found another Indian who admired the little mules and this one was willing to give nine ponies for them. That afternoon and night, I rode till I had crossed the Niobrara River, which was then the line between Nebraska and the Sioux Reservation in Dakota.

I always carried a frying pan, bacon, flour, and coffee with me, and with a blanket I could make a bed, using my saddle for a pillow and digging a hole in the ground to fit my hip bone, so I could camp anywhere I found water. I knew I was safe as soon as I got into Nebraska, for Indians—even the police—would not follow me there and take the chance of being shot, as it was unsafe for them to be off the reservation. I hobbled two or three of

the lead horses and after eating my breakfast lay down to sleep.

I had just got nicely settled when a fellow rode up with three fine horses and asked me what I was doing there.

"Stealing horses," I said, "the same thing you are doing."

"Do you know who I am?" he asked.

"Yes, the biggest horse thief in Nebraska," I answered, "and I know you'd put up a big kick if any one tried to rob you of the title."

"Well, who are you?" he asked.

"It don't make any difference who I am," I replied, "I only steal ponies from Indians, but you steal from white men. That is the only difference between you and me."

He got off his horse, came over, and pulled the blanket from off my head.

"My God! Custer, what are you doing here?" he asked. "When did you start stealing horses?"

"This is my first job, and I'm tired of it already," I returned. "Pull off your boots and crawl in."

So he drank some coffee and then lay down beside me. He was one of the boys who had helped me drive the cattle from Ogallala, three years before, and I had recognized him as soon as he spoke to me.

But he was stealing horses and was taking them up the Niobrara River to hide them. As he had only three, I asked him what he had done with the other one and he said he had overtaken a pilgrim outfit, a man, woman,

and several children. One of their horses had died and he had given them one of his and had told them that he could get another one easier than they could. I explained how I came to be there and we went to sleep.

He was caught later and served his sentence in the penitentiary, but after his release became an honorable and respected citizen.

About nine o'clock we heard shouts down by the river, and on going to see we found the three Indian police who had taken me back to the agency. They wanted me to take the ponies over to them, but I told them to *kickalap* or I would take a shot at them. In Sioux language *kickalap* means leave or get away.

But the Indians we call Sioux never call themselves by that name, which was given to them by the early French explorers and means "little snakes" because of their treachery. They call themselves Dakotas, which means friends, and they hate to be called Sioux as much as an American hates to be called a Dago or a Wop.

We stayed in camp till afternoon, then I went on to Niobrara, where I crossed the Missouri on the ferry and went on to Yankton. Within a few days, I sold all my ponies for from twenty-five to forty dollars each except one pinto, which I kept for a saddle horse for some time before selling him for eighty dollars. So my little mules, harness, and buggy which had cost me one hundred twenty dollars had brought me about four hundred, but I stayed off the Rosebud Reservation for more than twenty years and by that time the agent and all the older Indians were

gone. I met only one man, an old Frenchman, who knew about my trade with the Indian, Two Kettle.

The first railroad into the territory was built from Sioux City to Yankton in 1872 and the same year the Northern Pacific built from Fargo to the Missouri River but only ran a train over it about once a week. There was no settlement in the northern section then, but by building the road the railroad company received every other section of land for fifty miles on each side of the track. The development of the Hills had made this road useful in bringing freight and mail to Bismarck, from which it was taken by bull or mule trains and stages. In 1878, the Omaha built to Sioux Falls, and within two years the Milwaukee came into Dakota from Iowa to Canton and then west to Mitchell and west to the Missouri where Chamberlain was built. The North Western built west from Tracy, Minnesota, through Huron to the river during the same year, and a new town which was called Pierre sprang up opposite Fort Pierre.

Although the Black Hills were still as busy as they had been in 1876 and 1877, the romantic excitement was beginning to pass and many of the new settlers as well as the older freighters, like myself, were tiring of the dangers and hardships of the trail and went to work building grades for the railroads. This had been my intention when I got the horses from the stage company and had then traded them for mules and in April, 1878, my brother, J. W., or Wils as he was called, and I took our mules to Sioux Falls where the Omaha road was being built.

Wils had four horses and I had eight mules. My two wagons, one of which I was trailing, were loaded with one hundred bushels of shelled corn, which we had bought in Yankton for sixteen cents a bushel, and some oats. But the greater part of the hundred bushels of oats we had bought was on Wils' wagon. The oats had cost us fifteen cents a bushel, and we knew we would have to pay much more for this horse feed along the railroad.

A coach which Wils was taking to Sioux Falls for the stage line to use was trailing behind his wagon, and his wife had much easier riding in it than she would have had on the wagon. The trip was sort of a wedding journey or honeymoon for them, as they had been married a short time before, and Mary, in true pioneer spirit, was going with us to cook while we worked. Many a bride spent her honeymoon in a railroad camp that summer, and too much credit cannot be given to the pioneer women who went with their menfolks into every kind of hardship and danger.

The second night from Yankton we stayed with a Russian homesteader, where we got hay for our stock, and the next morning, April 9th, we started for Sioux Falls, about ten miles further. We had traveled perhaps five miles when we were overtaken by a storm. We were going northeast, and the storm, coming from the northwest, struck us square on the left. I soon found that I could not handle my eight mules with the jerk line as I was driving them. My mules jackknifed around to the south of the

wagons and I realized I could not keep them on the road or even tell where the road was if I tried to travel.

I had jumped to the ground when they first jackknifed and unhitched the chains which held the six head mules to the tongue, to keep them from breaking out the tongue. Then I unhitched the wheelers and got the harness off all of them and let them go, but they had drifted with the storm only fifty or sixty feet when they were lost to my sight in the thick, wet snow which was blowing and I did not know that I would ever see them again.

I was afraid to leave the wagon and try to find a settler, for houses were scarce in that country, and I could not have told my directions after a few minutes or returned to the wagon when I gave up looking for a house. I think this storm was even worse than the one in 1877, when I had gone back after the ox, for the spring storms are so wet and make traveling so much harder.

After turning the mules loose, I climbed up into the wagon, rolled out my bed under the canvas wagon cover, and crawled in. It must have been about nine o'clock by that time, and I lay there all day, listening to the wind and snow sweep over and around me and wondering what had become of my brother and his wife, who had been a few rods ahead of me when my mules stopped. All night the storm kept up after becoming more violent as evening had come on, and I was too much worried about Wils and Mary and the fate of my mules to sleep. I was hungry, too, for we had started early and I had no lunch with me. But I was thankful I had such good shelter and

a warm place to stay, for I had plenty of bedding and was more comfortable than I had been the night I had lain in the snowdrift near Washta Springs.

Toward morning the storm seemed to abate, and about seven o'clock the wind had nearly quit blowing, so I crawled out of the wagon to look around. At the east side of the wagons was a drift as high as they were, but underneath and around them the ground was bare. Two or three miles to the southeast I could see some stock which I thought might be my mules, so I took a halter and walked toward them. Sure enough there were the eight head all right, where they had drifted till they came to a straw stack and an old shed on the prairie.

These old sheds, though, often trapped stock to their death, for horses especially would go in to get out of a storm and back against the door and not be able to find the opening after they had crowded in, and unless found by the owner or some one who was curious enough to look into old buildings, would starve to death or die from thirst.

I put the halter on the lead mule, for there is always a leader in a bunch, and went back to the wagons where I fed them, but there was nothing for me to eat, as our grub box was in the old coach Wils was trailing. I was mighty hungry, but there was nothing to do but take up my belt, for I expected to have food before it became necessary to eat the oats and corn in my wagon and I was glad it was not very cold.

By the time I had put the harness on the mules and was

getting them hitched to the wagon, I saw some one coming on horseback from the direction of Sioux Falls and soon my brother arrived with some food. With his horses, driven with reins to each horse, he had been able to handle them and had gone on in to Sioux Falls, where he had put his teams in the livery barn and Wils and Mary had stayed at the hotel. He told me the men in the village had worried about me and wanted to go out to find me, saying I would perish in the blizzard.

But he had told them: "You needn't worry about that fellow. He has plenty of blankets and he'll crawl into the snow like a jackrabbit and lay there till the storm is over. I've known him to do it before this."

I ate my lunch and we started on. I should be able to say without further trouble, but I was not that lucky. We reached the Sioux River about a mile from where I had spent the night and had to ford it. The spring rains had made it a stream sixty to seventy feet wide and up to the mules' bellies, with the water cold and running full of slush ice and snow. Just as we got across, the kingbolt in my lead wagon broke and the mules took the front wagon trucks out from under the box, which went into the water.

About a half mile from the river we got another wagon from a farmer, and with his scoop shovel we shoveled the shelled corn into his wagon. Then we had to wade in the icy water to our waists to lift my box and prop it up till we could get the wagon coupled together again. We got it pulled out, shoveled the corn back into my wagon, and took the farmer's back to his house, where we fed the

mules and ate our dinner, reaching Sioux Falls that night.

There a pitiful sight awaited us. C. K. Howard had the contract to furnish several hundred milk cows to the government to be distributed to the Indian farmers, and he had many of them in a yard in town waiting to send them out to the agencies. Nearly a hundred of these cattle perished in the yard and many died among a bunch that had started over to the reservation a few days earlier.

Near the present site of Parker, a Mr. Marshall lost over fifty head in the same storm. He had turned them out in the morning, and the storm came up so suddenly he could not get them back into the sheds. They drifted with the storm into a slough, where they drowned or perished from the snow and cold.

CHAPTER XV

CAUGHT BY THE SIOUX

And now after an interruption of two years which had been filled with adventure, I was going back to my surveying, but the adventure and danger went with me, and I had one of the most thrilling experiences of my life.

Tom Marshall had a contract for surveying in Spink County along the Jim River north of the present city of Huron. Our work started at the Fourth Standard Parallel, near the present site of Redfield, and about twenty miles north was located a band of Indians under an old chief, Drifting Goose. The whole band were drifting geese, for they were the remnants of the old Santee band which had been led into this region by Omaha-Kā-tā, "The One Who Killed the Omaha (one of the Omaha tribe)." They had been joined by other renegades from different tribes and agencies, gathered into one band by their mutual discontent.

An old Indian, son of Omaha-Kā-tā, came into our camp and explained their troubles to us. They claimed that this band had never signed the treaty giving up their lands, and they still claimed the section along the Jim River from Lake Kampeska to near the Missouri and along the Sioux River as far south as the stone quarry near the present location of Dell Rapids, then west to Bijou Hills, and that the government had no right to take

it from them and give it to white settlers. In 1872, these Indians had driven out the M. T. Wooley surveying party by cutting the tugs from the harness and freeing the horses from the wagons, and they had done the same to General W. H. H. Beadle a year or two later.

So we were not surprised to find them watching us closely, and several times we found where they had replaced the sods after we had dug pits and built a mound to mark a section corner. Different Indians visited our camp and appeared friendly, but we knew they resented our being at work in the country they claimed.

One night about eleven o'clock I heard horses running over the prairie, so reached for my six-shooter and rolled out of the tent where Marshall and I slept near the door. Our dog, a big yellow staghound, began barking and dashed off toward the place where we had the horses picketed. I could hear the horses snorting as though scared, and I thought a coyote or something might have frightened them so they had broken loose; but I could still hear the sound of horses running.

I dropped to the ground and, looking to the northwest, for the sound seemed to be there, against the sky, I could see horseback riders galloping north. I sent a few shots in that direction, then ran out to the horses. The four work horses were there as we had left them, two loose and two picketed, but our saddle pony was gone.

By that time the camp was aroused and we took the horses in, tying them to the wagons, cut some grass for them to eat, and then went back with lanterns to see if

there were any tracks. There we found about half the rope which had held the pony and it had been cut in two. We heard a horse running and put out the lanterns, then ran back to the wagons and told the other boys not to shoot. I was afraid some of the crew might get shot, for some of the boys were still searching around the camps. One boy was so excited he was wild and would have gone out alone to fight the whole Sioux nation, but I took his gun away, for I had seen men not used to danger get so aroused that they were likely to shoot themselves or some of their own party, accidentally.

We knew not what to expect, but finding all our men were back in camp, we took our guns and went down to the river bank, where we concealed ourselves with the camp in view if it should be molested. We heard more running, and, shortly after, the pony dashed up among the other horses, snorting and apparently scared wild. We caught him and found he still had about twenty feet of rope, unraveled at the end from dragging after he had broken away from the Indians and run back to camp. We tied up the pony, rejoicing that he had returned, for he was a fine saddle horse, a Texas pony, weighing about eleven hundred pounds.

No more trouble was expected, so we returned to camp, but put a man to guard, and after that night we kept the stock tied up to the wagons while some one kept watch in the camp.

When the crews returned from work a few days later, the cook told us that a half-breed from the Crow Creek

Agency had stopped in camp that day on his way to the Sisseton Reservation. This half-breed said he had stopped at the Santee camp, ten or twelve miles north of us, and the Indians were very much excited, ugly and threatening. I knew this man, Le Clair, for his father had been interpreter at the Crow Creek Agency for many years and I knew the young man was reliable, so we realized that our position was far from safe. We talked over the situation and decided to send word to the surveyor general of Dakota Territory at Yankton.

The next morning, the boys all wrote letters to send with me and we buried all our field notes, so they would not be destroyed if the camp were attacked. I started about ten o'clock to ride the pony one hundred thirty miles to Firesteel, near the present city of Mitchell, where I could take the stage to Yankton. I had a picket rope and some oats for the pony, a blanket, some matches, a peach can in which to make coffee, and some lunch. My six-shooter was hung on the saddle horn and the other things were all tied behind on the saddle.

I rode down the Jim River eight or ten miles to where an Indian trail from Crow Creek crossed the river at a place called Rocky Ford, and from here the river runs east about seven miles before it turns south again. I had planned to go on that night about forty miles till I struck the river again and camp there; then the next day I could ride the seventy-five miles to Firesteel post office. There was timber near this ford and it was a favorite camping place of the Indians. Just below the ford a creek comes

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into the river from the west, and the banks of this creek as well as of Jim River at this point were steep, with the water from fifteen to twenty feet below the prairie level. I watered my pony at the river, then rode up the creek about five hundred yards till I found a fairly good crossing.

As I rode up out of the creek bottom, I heard two or three shots, and the pony gave a jump, breaking the left bridle rein. I looked back and saw three Indians on horseback galloping toward me. My first thought was to pull my gun and try to fight them off, but I decided it would be better to let my horse carry me away, as I knew he easily could outrun their little ponies. I leaned forward and caught the cheek piece of the bridle, then turned south to the open prairie. He was running well and gaining, though it was hard running through the tall, heavy grass, when he hit some small boulders which I had not seen. The pony fell and I went off over his head, and as I fell I saw my watch fly off to one side. As I jumped up I grabbed my hat and started running back toward the river, some three or four hundred feet, thinking, if I could reach that, I could have protection in the timber and by hiding below the bank.

Two of the Indians were west of me between me and the creek, and the other, mounted on a good white horse, was east and much nearer to where my pony had fallen. As I turned back, he started toward me and was very close when I tripped in the tangles of the tall grass and went down. Before I could gain my feet, he had jumped from

his horse and grabbed me by the hair, holding my face to the ground till the other two came up and began cutting off my clothes. I thought my last day had come, but I began talking to them in the Sioux language, telling them that the soldiers would come after them if they hurt me.

They had cut off my coat, shirt, and pants, and I saw the leather string with the ring from my watch still hanging to them. My assailants cut off a silk handkerchief I was wearing around my neck and slashed my boots, making a gash across my right foot which bled freely.

My pony was loose and I knew he would go back to camp and give the alarm. I told them this. They seemed surprised that I could talk their language and asked who I was and where I had come from. I told them I knew Captain Daugherty, the post commandant at Brûlé Agency, that I knew Spotted Tail, Red Cloud, and other leaders among the Sioux, and they began talking among themselves.

By the time they had stripped me they seemed to be afraid the soldiers would punish them if they hurt me, but they did not know what to do with me. After some discussion among themselves, they led me across the creek, still wondering what would happen next. But there they turned me loose and pointed back toward our camp.

"*Kickalap minnehaska tepee.*" (Get back to the white man's tent.)

And I got. As the old stage driver said to me after the holdup, "What would you have done?"

Then they began shooting around me to scare me, per-

haps, and I'll admit they did, for I thought they had turned me free to use me for a target, but none of the shots came very near, though I think it was the only time I have ever been afraid of an Indian. But these were not ordinary Indians. They were outlaws, just as there were outlaws among the white men.

I ran in the direction of our camp, exhausted from my trying experience, with my foot bleeding and painful as the rough grass and vines tore at the wound. It was in August and the hot sun beat down on me mercilessly as I staggered on, hardly aware of my directions but trying to keep a course toward the camp.

I would never have reached it had the boys not come out to look for me.

After the pony had fallen, he had gained his feet and returned to camp, and then the boys knew that I had met with some trouble and feared it had been Indians. Five of them took the horses and the pony and went out along the trail I had taken. After riding three or four miles, they could see me running over the prairie like a wild man. Our camp dog, failing to recognize me, rushed to attack and they had to shoot him to keep him from killing me. As they reached me I fought them off, and though they tried to get me to ride, they only got me back to camp by driving me like a wild animal. One man went ahead to hide all the guns before I got there, fearing I would kill them all in my frenzy.

How they found me and got me back to camp was told to me after I had begun to recover, for I was delirious

till near morning and slept all the next day. By that time I was better, and after three or four days, when I was able to stand the trip, Marshall took me in the light wagon down below Firesteel to the home of Mr. Norton, father of my sister-in-law, Mary. He and his good wife took care of me while Marshall went on to Yankton and I slowly recovered from the ordeal, though I never afterward was the strong and healthy man I had been and the gash on my foot left a scar which I carry to this day.

At Yankton, Marshall reported the trouble to the surveyor general, who communicated with Captain Daugherty, and was told that two companies of soldiers had already been sent out. The word had been sent to the agency, even before Marshall had reached Yankton, that the Indians were making trouble for the surveying party at Bad Nation Camp on the Jim River, and the commandant had sent the soldiers to bring them in to the agency. I'll bet then the three Indians, who had caught me, were glad they had let me go.

Marshall returned in about a week and took me back to the outfit. As we neared the Jim River and came down off the high prairie from the south we saw a beautiful scene. There, near Rocky Ford and the creek west of it where the Indians had stripped me, was a camp of something like two hundred Indians and the two companies of soldiers, with tents and tepees all up, guards walking back and forth with guns on their shoulders and three or four hundred Indian ponies feeding on the prairie. At the other side of the camp, the cavalry horses were herded.

We stopped at the soldiers' camp and learned how they had gone out to the Indian camp and taken the entire band.

The Indians were taken to the agency and Drifting Goose was confined for some time. Later the agent let some of the band go back to gather their corn and get ready for winter, and these Indians who returned to their camp treated us well—all except some old squaws. We ran our lines through their village, and these old squaws tore down the mounds as fast as we put them up. Finally one squaw chased our flagman with her butcher knife and I waved my gun before her and threatened to shoot if she did not behave, but the other Indians took her away and we had no more trouble.

We finished our work about the last of October and returned to Yankton, stopping at Rocky Ford to hunt for my watch, although we had looked for it several times before. Now we set the prairie afire, and when it was cool enough for us to walk on we looked among the rocks and Marshall found the watch. I wound it up and it began running, apparently none the worse for the fire and weather during its two months on the prairie. I was glad to get it back, not so much for the value but because my father had sent it to me on my twenty-first birthday, nine years before. It saw many vicissitudes, for except for the two months it lay on the prairie, I carried it more than fifty years.

It was not as reckless to burn miles of prairie to look for a watch as it may sound now. No one lived in the

region, and the Indians started such fires every autumn to drive the game to the streams, where they could more easily be killed for the winter's supply of meat. Our fire ran before us fifty miles to the south and east as far as the river, so we were sure there would be game along the stream and Marshall wanted me to kill an antelope to take back to the surveyor general.

I took my old rifle and went over to the river, where on the east side I saw what looked like about five hundred in one bunch. I crossed the river and came down a draw back of them, so they did not see me. I had only two or three cartridges left and did not like to use such big shells and get only one deer, so I thought I would just shoot into the herd and perhaps get a dozen or more.

But the truth is, I shot without aiming at any one animal and did not get even one out of the whole herd, or, if I did, I could not find it and they all ran for the high prairie right past me. I threw in another shell, and as they ran by I raised up and took a shot at the herd. I saw one go down, ran to him and bled him, then looked after the bunch. About a hundred feet off, I saw another dragging its hind legs, so ran and killed it, then looked up and off on the prairie several hundred feet away was another one, running in a circle. As I ran toward it, it fell to the ground, the entrails dragging, so I killed it also and shouted to the man who had come with me to bring the horses. We got all three deer on one pony and, riding the other, went back to the teams. So we had fresh

meat all the way in and still had one antelope to give away.

Our little party of eleven boys and men—for the ages ranged from sixteen to thirty—furnishes a splendid illustration of the type of men who were pioneering on the prairie and building a new state on the Last Frontier. Though none of us had more than a common-school education, all became respected citizens in the communities where we located and the five whose names I recall held positions of honor.

Bert Foster, Hi Sole, and myself were called to serve our local governments and in the state legislature. Tom Marshall, who had come from Wisconsin at the age of eighteen, began his career on the railroad as a section hand, progressing to the office of surveyor general and then to survey contractor. Later he founded a bank at Oakes, North Dakota, and was a member of Congress for many years.

Tommy Ziebach is still an active factor in the state. He was born at Sergeant Bluff, Iowa, in 1858, and migrated with his father to Yankton in 1861. After some trips with surveying parties, he followed in the footsteps of his father and established a newspaper in Scotland, which he edited for many years till he was appointed to the Seal Fisheries Commission in Alaska. Upon his return to South Dakota, he was elected to the legislature for several terms, and at present he is located in a bank at Wessington Springs.

Our party was not an unusual group of young men;

just one of a number of such parties that went out during the summers to survey and divide the land and prepare for settlements. But these few instances reveal the opportunities which the Territory offered to men who were sober, honest, and upright.

My next trip with a survey party was not so exciting, although we did have several interesting experiences, but no trouble with Indians. Charles Bates and I were given a contract for work on the Northern Pacific, west of Bismarck, in 1879. Early in the spring, before the Missouri broke up, we went to Bismarck and carried the Eleventh and Twelfth Standard Parallels across on the ice and established corners on the west side of the river. By doing this, we could avoid triangling and losing so much time when we were ready to start work, and besides we had them correctly located.

As soon as the steamboats could go up the river, we loaded our mules, horses, provisions, and crew for Bismarck which we reached after ten or twelve days, and were soon ready to begin work. The railroad was building west from the Missouri, through a country which is largely underlaid with a soft coal, and we could not use our magnetic-needle compass because of so much mineral in the ground but had to run all our lines with a solar compass. Of course, when the sun was not shining, we could not use the solar compass, so the work went slowly, but we had a good time and spent many a day in camp playing cards.

Seven-up was a favorite game and the stakes were often

coal banks, for some one of the crew would locate a new claim almost every day, and at one time, because of my luck at cards and at finding them, I was the owner of thirty coal mines. But these coal banks were so numerous that we thought them worth nothing, so did not file any claim to them or the land on which they were found.

One Sunday, we had a visitor, a Mr. Cunningham from Yankton who had a grading contract for the railroad, and he had come over to exchange news. After dinner, Bates finished the ceremony with a drink of whisky which we carried for medicine, snake bites, etc. A few days later, a man came riding into our camp like a madman and wanted a pint of whisky for one of their party who had been struck by a rattler. We made fun of him and said we would give him a drink, but he could not work us for a pint of whisky with any story like that. Finding us doubtful of his story, though he continued to insist that he wanted the whisky for a snake bite, he left our camp.

Bates and I talked it over and decided to investigate, for we were afraid there was some truth to it, so I took a horse and the pint of whisky and rode over to the grading camp about four miles distant. There I found a man who had been bitten by a rattlesnake and was undergoing the most unusual treatment I had ever seen. They had stripped him and buried him in mud, covering him entirely except for his mouth and nose.

I gave him a little whisky, for his heart was very weak —too weak for much stimulant. His whole body was

blotched and spotted from the poison, and his hand where the snake had struck was terribly swollen. But we continued the small doses of whisky at frequent intervals and after a while the blotches began to disappear. Then he was taken from the mud and finally recovered, but was a very sick man for days.

Sometime in July we were visited by an inspector for the railroad company, who was driving over the land they had received as grants for building the road. He was inspecting and appraising it. He and the man who was taking him on the trip had camped one night about three miles above our camp on a small creek, and, being inexperienced campers, they had pitched their tent on low ground near the creek.

During the night a heavy rain fell and the next day we stayed in camp, for the creek was too high for us to get across to our work. About ten o'clock in the morning, the driver came to our camp and told us of their experience. About nine o'clock in the evening, as they had been preparing for bed, a wall of water several feet high had come rolling into their tent, sweeping away their beds, the tent, and everything. The driver had managed to get to a tree which he climbed and saved himself. He had sat there in the tree all night, and in the morning had searched in all directions for the inspector, the mules, wagon, and the tent, but to no purpose.

We took our team and went with him back to his camp and searched all down the creek between their camp and ours, but we found no trace of the man or the mules.

Then we took the driver up to the railroad camp from which he could get back home.

There another result of the storm confronted us. Every tent was blown down, even a frame store building had been destroyed. The owner of the store said he had been badly scared when he felt the building going to pieces and had run outside only to find that the whole camp had been leveled. He had no place to go for safety and ran out on the prairie. After running about two hundred feet, he had thrown himself, face down, to the ground and grabbed a bunch of grass in each hand. He lay there about twenty minutes till he felt the force of the wind letting up.

We had seen the storm from our camp, but it was off to the north of us and we had had but very little wind with some hail and a hard rain, and we knew nothing about how bad it had been till the next day, when the man had come to us for help and we took him to the railroad.

The day after the storm, every one in the railroad camp and in our camp turned out to look for the land inspector, but we could find nothing of him. The man who owned the outfit found the tent and wagon down the creek and the wagon box at another place. The mules he located at Mandan some time later, but the man could not be found, and after his disappearance had been reported to the railroad company, his wife and brother came out from New York to continue the search. They spent some time searching along the creek, but at last returned without having found any trace of him.

About a month after the storm, the grading outfits moved over onto the creek where we had camped, for the road was going down it a few miles. On a Sunday afternoon, one of the men was walking down by the creek and discovered a brass button on a pile of gravel. He stooped to pick it up and found it was fastened to a vest, then pulled on it and dug around, uncovering a body, well preserved in the gravel. The grading gang covered the body deeper and left it till the brother came out again and identified it, but he did not move it till cold weather, as the men had covered the mound with stones and built a fence to protect it and to keep coyotes and wolves from digging there.

One of our boys, during the summer, reported seeing a horse alone on the prairie with a blanket or something under him, and after that we saw him several times, but always at a distance, and upon our trying to approach he would gallop away. The news of this stray horse spread through the camps, for it was unusual to find an American horse wild like that and there was a good deal of guessing as to where he had come from and what had happened to his rider. We would have liked to catch him, but had nothing but our work horses and mules; and we could easily see they were no match for the wild horse.

One day a young man came to our camp to see Bates, and, hearing about the horse, wanted to catch him. I was sure I could catch him if I had a good, fast horse, so the next Sunday the young man returned with a good saddle horse and led one for me. The boys in the camp took a

team and we all went out on the prairie, and in an hour or so we sighted our horse, but the man who had come to catch him was on one side and I was on the other before he discovered us, for the boys with the team had kept his attention.

I ran him toward the other horseman and he ran the horse back toward me and I rode after him with my lariat. Before we had run a mile, I had roped him and held him till the other man came up with another rope. Then the team and wagon came and we got more ropes on him, so we could throw him to the ground and take off the saddle, for that was what had been hanging under his body. He must have broken away at some time with the saddle on, and in rolling he had worked it around so that it hung under him and interfered with his running when we chased him.

We took him to camp and tied him to a tree, where we left him till the man returned with another horseman to help take him away. He was a fine horse about eight years old and well worth more than the trouble it had been to catch him. The saddle was given to me for helping and was in good condition except that the stirrups were broken, I suppose from his rolling on them. The horse was branded "P.O." on the left jaw, but I never heard who had owned him before he ran away.

But the fun of the whole trip was at the expense of the cook. It was customary in camp for the boys to do their washing on Sunday and sometimes the guy ropes of our tent looked like a New York East Side tenement.

For some reason, the garments did not get dry one wash day and were left on the ropes when we went out to work Monday morning. During the day a hard rain came up, so we all got soaked to the skin and returned to camp, anticipating a change to warm, dry clothes. But when we came in sight of the camp, there on the guy ropes hung all our clothes just as we had left them and the boys asked the cook why he had not taken them in.

"You never give me any orders to bring 'm in," he said, "and I never work without orders."

"Is that so? Well," I said, "I'll give the boys orders to throw you into the water hole and then we'll all be wet."

Several of them grabbed him and threw him into a hole near the camp in spite of his struggles, and as soon as he climbed out he ran to the tent and got a butcher knife.

"Hold on," I said to him. "Don't start anything like that or you'll get killed."

Then Bates spoke up for the first time.

"Maybe the boys went a little too far by throwing you into the creek, but I really don't blame them, and I'll take you to town to-morrow and get another man. You don't need to do any more work in this camp."

By the time we had finished the work and returned to Bismarck, the boats had stopped coming so far up the river, for it was late in the fall and they were afraid of being frozen in, as some had been the previous winter. I sold my mules to Joe Pennell, who was freighting to Fort Keogh, Montana. We told the boys we would pay

their way back to Yankton or give them the money and they could stay there or do whatever they pleased. Nels Smith had not sold his horses and said he would drive them back to Yankton, and I said I would go with him for company, Bates was going on the train by way of St. Paul, and the other seven said they would buy boats and go down the river. They got two good skiffs and took one of the tents, Smith and I taking the other, and we all left Bismarck about the same time.

In about a week, we covered the two hundred fifty miles to Fort Pierre, or rather to a camping place opposite, on the east side. We saw a steamboat across the river, and I went over to see about going down the river with them. They were to leave the next day and would take the team and wagon for eight dollars and us for three dollars each.

But while I was at Fort Pierre making these arrangements, down the river came the two boats and the men we had left at Bismarck. They had had all they wanted of boating on the Missouri, so they sold the boats and went down on the steamboat with us.

At Rosebud Landing, about one hundred twenty miles above Yankton, the captain of our boat received word to hold the boat till my brother Wils arrived from the agency, as he was bringing the agent in to the hospital. Wils was taking our stock off the stage line he had been running to the Rosebud Agency and had sublet it to a half-breed, because he had had trouble with the Indians and had been shot through the leg.

His men were at the landing with some thirty head of horses and the captain said he would take them down for thirty dollars or would take the stock and wagons, too, for forty dollars. I wanted Wils to put them on the boat, but he said the men had lost one horse and he would never see it again if he left it there, so he would take all the horses and go up to the Brûlé Agency. There he could cross on the ice or let them swim and go on to Mitchell, where he intended starting a stage line to Sioux Falls.

My brother sent the stock on ahead, but he stayed to look for the lost horse. When the men reached White River, they turned the horses loose without seeing that they had been to water and went to prepare their own dinner. Soon they heard the horses squealing down by the river and ran down to find nearly all of them had mired down in the quicksand. The men did what they could to get them out, but twelve head were lost, one with a good saddle.

So we would have been ahead if Wils had let the one horse go and put the others on the boat. It was a hard blow to us, but we had to take it as part of the game.

CHAPTER XVI

LAME JOHNNY IS HUNG

During the time we had been on the road from Bismarck there had been a big fire in Deadwood which had destroyed nearly the whole town, even the courthouse and all the records. But such a disaster did not stop the hunting and mining of gold and the camp was soon in full swing again. The first buildings had been pretty rough structures, but by 1879 a number of sawmills were in operation throughout the Hills, supplying lumber to the near-by camps and sending it out by wagon trains.

Arriving at Yankton, I spent several days at the office of the surveyor general, closing up our work, and then looked around for mules, as I wanted to buy four or five span and go to Deadwood, where I knew there would be plenty of hauling that winter and big prices for transporting provisions to replace what had been stored for use during the winter months but had been destroyed by the fire.

While waiting to get my outfit together, I loafed around the hotel and business places, renewing my acquaintance with friends and visiting with my brother Will. One day, Will and I were in a clothing store, when a green sort of fellow came in to get a suit of clothes. After selecting the suit, he looked at shirts and was attracted by one which had more trimming than the others. This one had

a standing collar attached and trimmed with red braid and two strips of the braid ran down the front. Seeing that he was undecided about taking this attractive garment, my brother suggested to him that it would take well with the girls and he would not need to buy a collar for it while the others had none attached. That settled it, so he bought the suit and the nightshirt, for that was what it was, to wear with it.

During the course of the buying, my brother had made quite an impression on the stranger by helping him with good advice, and his opinion was now sought in regard to the entertainment the town offered. The stranger said he had heard that Yankton was a tough place and had lots of fighting and shooting.

The merchant, John Bates, was a brother of Charles Bates, who had been my partner in the surveying trip the summer before. He and Will realized that they had a tenderfoot at their mercy and told him wild tales of what had happened in the town and of what was likely to occur at any minute. They asked if he had a gun and said it was not safe to go out on the street without one, especially for a man dressed in new clothes, as people would think he had money and he would be held up. The stranger changed his clothes at the store, and while he was doing that Bates and Will were planning to have some fun with him.

I had not taken any part in the conversation, and when an opportunity came to take the tenderfoot out of my hearing, they told him to look out for me, as I was a

bad man and the worst tough on the Missouri River from Sioux City, Iowa, to Fort Benton, Montana. They said that if he wanted to go out that night to see the town they would go with him and would get him a gun.

While I was around town, I did not carry my Colt's, so Will got it and took the bullets out of the shells, leaving the powder. Will and a clerk in the clothing store were to take the stranger out to see the town and I was to scare him. I told them I did not like to be mixed up in such a plan, for it easily might go too far and some one be shot or badly hurt.

But they insisted I help them in their joke, so about ten o'clock that night Bates and I walked down along the levee to French Joe's saloon and told him what we were up to. My brother and Emil Brauch were bringing the stranger down and I was expected to start a rough house in true bad-man fashion. In a short time they arrived, and soon after that I began to throw the chairs and tables around and knock the glasses off the bar, trying to start a fight with the men, especially the three new arrivals.

"Has anybody got a gun?" cried the barkeeper. "Shoot him before he breaks up the place."

"You've got a gun," said Will to the greenhorn, "shoot him before he gets us all."

The fellow pulled his gun (my gun) and began shooting at me. At the first shot the lights went out but he kept right on shooting till he had emptied the gun. Then Will told him to run for his life, for he had killed six men. He broke away from the crowd and got outdoors,

then ran up the street toward his hotel with my gun still in his hand and with me running after him, yelling, "Drop that gun!"

We met the night watchman and he stood staring till he saw me, then cried, "Phut in the worrld is the mather, Zack?"

"Keep still," I said. "We're just having some fun with a tenderfoot."

I ran on to the hotel and looked in. Our man was talking to the old night clerk and I heard him telling how he had killed six men and wanted the clerk to hide him as he was being chased. Bates and Will and the policeman arrived and the two jokers told the officer not to arrest the gunman as he had not been to blame, but they told the poor fellow he had better get out of town at once, for I was still looking for him and he might be lynched for killing those six men if he was caught. They told him to leave that night and drive as far as he could, and he was anxious to go, so they went out to the barn with him and helped him hitch up his old sorrel horse to the two-wheeled cart he had and they saw him drive off into the night.

Then we all went into the hotel and had a good laugh, each one having his own version to relate, telling it again and again as the crowd was swelled by new arrivals when they heard the noise we were making.

The night clerk said he had rushed in waving his gun like a wild man and panting: "Hide me, quick! They're after me. I've killed six men."

And the old night watchman said the fellow came up the street, and "went past me so fast you coulda set a tay table on his coat tail."

In a day or two I had my mules, three span of them, and harness for four teams, and with a light half-spring wagon I started driving to Fort Pierre. Will Seaman had a ranch on Choteau Creek about forty-five miles north of Yankton, and there I would get my fourth span of mules. While we were unhitching and putting my mules in the barn, I saw the fellow who had "shot" the six men, but I did not speak to him or tell Seaman about the joke we had played on his man. With my mules all cared for, I went on up to the house.

Soon Seaman came in and said to me, "Zack, what kind of a trick have you been playing, or have you been in some trouble lately?"

"Why do you ask me that?" I inquired.

"Why, one of my men is scared half to death out at the barn," he answered. "He did not want me to keep you overnight, said you were the worst man on the Missouri River. I told him he must be wrong, as I had known you well for years and last winter you had been my partner in a freighting contract. But he said I was mistaken, for he had been in a shooting scrape in Yankton with you and thought he had killed you or some one who looked just like you and now here you are all right again. But he is sure it ain't safe to have you around or to keep you overnight."

So I had to explain, and I told them about the joke

we had played, and the Seamans had a good laugh over it then and for years afterward whenever they saw me.

When the men came in to supper, the tenderfoot never took his eyes off me, but I said nothing to him and pretended not to recognize him though he looked puzzled and scared. In the morning, when we went out to the barn, we found his horse and cart were gone and that he had left early the night before. I was sorry then that we had played such a joke on him that he was still scared of me and I made up my mind never to have any more such fun with simple-minded people, for they take it too seriously and some one might easily be harmed.

I drove west toward the Missouri River, and about twenty miles from Seaman's ranch I overtook a man walking. I asked him to ride, but he said, "No, thank you, I'm in a hurry."

"Well, you must be in a hurry," I replied, "if you think you can go faster than I can," and I drove away.

That night I stopped at a ranch house and saw this walker go by, but the next day I passed him again, for I was making about forty miles a day, as I had no loads except my bed and feed enough for my mules till I got to Pierre. I did not see him again, as he could take a short cut while I had to follow the road, but the last night before reaching Fort Pierre I stopped at a ranch house about twenty-five miles east of the river and he stayed all night at another ranch. He got started the next morning before I did but I passed him before noon.

Then I had to go about a mile up Medicine Creek to

find a crossing while he crossed on a footbridge and got in the lead once more. It was fifteen miles to Fort Pierre, and I promised myself that I would beat that fellow in if I had to kill my mules to do it, so that afternoon I passed him again and got in before he did, but I beat him by not more than a half-hour.

We both stayed with Joe Kirley on the east side of the river that night and I asked the man why he had refused to ride with me. He said he was on his way to Deadwood to enter a five-hundred-mile walking match and he wanted to keep in condition. He had walked all the way from St. Louis and would walk to Deadwood. After meeting him, I was interested in the race and was glad to learn later that he was the winner.

At Fort Pierre I got two freight wagons and loads for them—twelve thousand pounds of freight and three thousand pounds of corn—which with the wagons made well over two thousand pounds for each mule's load. But I had some of the best mules that ever went into the Hills. One span of five-year-olds weighed three thousand pounds and I had paid four hundred dollars for them, but the next spring I sold them to the Homestake Mining Company for seven hundred.

I arrived in Deadwood about the first of December and found it much as I had expected it would be, with lots of rebuilding going on, so it was no trouble to find work for my teams. I spent the next six weeks hauling lumber from the sawmills to Deadwood for Hood and Scott, then went to Sidney, Nebraska, after freight.

During the fall, there had been a good deal of excitement in Deadwood over the activities of Lame Johnny, a road agent who had aroused the Hills more than was usual over such affairs by his boldness and utter disregard for life. He had held up the Deadwood-Cheyenne stage, and after calling for the driver to stop had been displeased by the failure to comply with his request with such promptness as Johnny expected, so he had followed his command with a well-aimed bullet. The horses became frightened and finding their reins loose had started to run, but Johnny stopped them by shooting one of the horses and then had the passengers at his mercy, though he did nothing more to them than to take their money. This holdup had been staged in daylight and as Johnny walked with a noticeable limp, one leg being shorter than the other, it was easy to detect and identify him although he had worn the usual handkerchief across the lower part of his face.

He was caught and put in jail at Deadwood, but the jail was only a log building, as the former jail had been burned with the courthouse, and Johnny broke out, going down through the Hills into Nebraska. Near the old Red Cloud Agency he was captured by the soldiers, and Frank Moulton, a deputy United States marshal from Rapid City, went to get him.

Another freighter named Batey and I had gone down to Sidney with the Jewett and Dickinson outfit, paying their herder for tending our mules at night. They could not get loads for their large outfit as soon as we did for

our smaller ones and we started back without waiting for them, but we had to do our own night herding on the return trip.

The third day out from Sidney would take us to Colonel Johnson's ranch on Snake Creek, about seventy-five miles north, and all that day we had pushed our mules on through the snow, for we knew a bad storm was coming and we did not want to be caught in it out on the prairie. About four o'clock we came in sight of the buildings, and about the same time the storm struck us with such violence that we had hard work keeping the mules on the trail even for that distance, with the wind and snow whipping into their faces from the northwest.

Colonel Johnson had built good log buildings and kept a store and road ranch, as such stopping places were called then, where the freighters could stay instead of camping out. He owned perhaps a couple of thousand cattle, which lived on the open prairie and were rounded up occasionally and branded by the cowboys who were kept at the ranch.

After fighting our mules and the storm for an hour or so, we had arrived almost at the ranch buildings when we were intercepted by a great herd of these cattle, Johnson's and other ranchmen's, which were drifting with the storm in spite of desperate efforts of the cowboys to hold them and we now had to fight our way through these milling cattle before we reached the shelter of the house and the satisfying efforts of Colonel Johnson's man cook, for this was a true cow camp and without "petticoats."

But the hard-earned rest did not last long for me, because not long after we had got our mules into the corral and had fed them and had our supper, two of the riders came in from the herd to get fresh horses. One of the men was sick and unable to go out again, so I volunteered to take his place, though the colonel and Batey protested against me adding this further hardship to my long day on the trail and in the storm. But I went with the other man back to the herd on the prairie, about nine o'clock, and all night, in the storm, the five or six of us rode round and round the cattle to keep them milling and to hold them from drifting.

The cattle ran and our horses galloped in the dark, to the cracking of horns in the mêlée and the moan and shriek of the wind. All night we rode, with the sting of icy snow in our faces, crooning the cowboy's monotonous, "Whope, Who-o-o-pe, Whope, Whope, Whope. Who-o-o-pe, Who-o-o-pe, Whope, Whope, Whope."

By morning the fury of the storm abated and daylight showed an area fully a mile wide and five miles long, which the cattle had trampled bare of snow with their milling during the night, but we had kept them from drifting farther than that distance from the ranch.

I rode back to the ranch as soon as the cattle began to become quiet, for I wanted to get an early start and knew we would have slow traveling, breaking a trail through the snow. Our wagons were loaded with eggs and we were getting unusually high prices for bringing them to Deadwood from Sidney in twelve days while the aver-

age time on this trip for freight trains was fifteen days. So I did not lay over at the ranch, but pulled out about the time the cowboys were getting the first of the cattle back to the range up the creek. It had not been so very cold, only about ten degrees below zero, for snowstorms do not come with cold weather.

We camped the fourth night after the blizzard near Buffalo Gap and had pulled to the top of the hill, so we need not put the teams to such a hard pull the first thing in the morning. We had water for cooking and camped beside the wagons, but after supper, Batey took his eight and my ten mules back down to the creek for shelter and feed and where they could get water. About one o'clock he came in and woke me, then I took our herd pony and started back to the mules where he had left them about half a mile down the creek from where the road crossed.

I had gone part way down the hill when I saw the stage from Sidney coming down the opposite hill across the creek from me and knew it was the stage by the lights burning beside the driver's seat. At the foot of the hill I turned off the road, going down the creek to the east, but had not gone far when I heard a commotion and knew the stage had stopped, as I could not hear the familiar rattling of the harness and the beating of horses' hoofs on the frozen ground. My first thought was that the stage was being held up, so I pulled my gun and started back, for I thought for once in my life I was going to have a chance to meet road agents right where I wanted them. But before I reached the stage, a man rode

toward me from the shadow of the trees and cried, "Halt!"

I stopped and got off my horse, keeping him between me and the bandit, who had also dismounted and who now asked me who I was and what I was doing there.

"Herding my mules and tending to my own business," I answered.

"Well, you had better go on back to your mules then," he said.

"And let you fellows rob the stage?" I said. "Not much. Do you know who I am?"

"No," he answered. "Who are you?"

"They call me Custer. My name is Zack Sutley."

"My God, Zack, don't shoot! We're not robbing the stage. We're going to hang Lame Johnny. We've got him and are going to hang him."

"Are you sure it's Lame Johnny?" I asked. I knew he had broken jail in Deadwood before I had gone to Sidney.

"Sure it's Lame Johnny. Frank Moulton had him, taking him back to Deadwood."

"Well, go to it," I said. "I've no objections. He should have been hung long ago."

We started on toward the stage and the man wanted me to hand over my gun, which, of course, I refused to do.

All the time we had been talking, in fact ever since I had first heard the commotion and until we reached the scene of the trouble, there had been cursing and swearing, mostly by one voice which I took to be Johnny's, for he had the reputation of possessing a choice collection of

oaths. As we approached, another man on watch stopped us, but my companion told him who we were and that Moulton knew me and I was all right. Beside the stage was Moulton, inside was the messenger, Walt Hunter, and the driver was at the head of his teams holding them, but their guns had all been taken away from them.

All the others were masked with handkerchiefs. I rode up and said, "Hello, Frank! What does this mean?"

"They got the drop on us," he answered.

By this time the masked men had Johnny on the ground, tying his hands, with him cursing all the time, even telling Moulton that he was "a hell of an officer, not to protect your prisoner."

Johnny was then put on a horse with a rope around his neck and the horse was led under a tree. The rope was then thrown over a limb and tied to the body of the tree. When this scene comes back to my mind, it seems I can still hear Johnny swearing and telling his captors what he would do to them if he only had a gun. But they told him he was out of luck, for he had no gun and none of them had any intention of loaning him one.

Then the horse was led out and Johnny was left hanging to the tree. The masked men rode off at once. Moulton commissioned me to stay there with the body till he went to Rapid City and returned with the coroner, and the stage went on its way.

I took the mules to camp and tied them to the wagons, then went back to a ranch about three miles south toward

Buffalo Gap to tell the men there what had happened and to get them to help me. We cut the body down and wrapped it in a blanket, and one man stayed there as I had told the sheriff I would do and as I would have done had I not arranged for some one to stay in my place.

Batey and I pulled on toward Rapid, and about noon we met Moulton, the stage driver, the messenger, and the coroner. We camped there and I took my saddle horse and went back with them. The three men from the ranch made up the jury and we others told what we knew of the happening the previous night. The jury then announced the verdict, "Hung by parties unknown."

However, I was sure I had recognized some of the men in the party, though I could not have sworn to them with their masks and in the moonlight. But I still think they were all men who worked for the stage company and that the affair had all been planned, for it looked very strange that not one passenger was on that stage except Moulton and Lame Johnny.

They only hurried Johnny's departure, however, for he undoubtedly would have met the same fate at the hands of the authorities had he been taken back to Deadwood and tried for the stage holdup, the robbery of the mail, and the murder of the stage driver. It was a case of long-deferred punishment overtaking him in the end, for he had preyed on society for years.

He was buried there beneath the tree where he was hung, and for years afterwards the bullwhackers and mule

skinners picked up stones along the road and carried them to throw at the grave to express their contempt. When I saw it last, a mound of stones covered the spot where he was buried, and his enemies had built him a monument while meaning to dishonor his memory.

CHAPTER XVII

AT CHEYENNE CROSSING

Upon my return to Deadwood I met my brother Will, who had come from Yankton with a load of goods which he had sold as well as his teams and wagon, and was waiting there till I returned from Sidney, to go to Fort Pierre with me. There were three German boys who wanted to go with us and we stopped in the foothills and loaded the wagons with pitch-pine wood for our camp fires.

I had bought fifteen or twenty dried beef-hides and some deerskins. These I piled in the trail wagon with the firewood, and they proved very useful before we reached Fort Pierre. I had no freight, as I was going out to meet the first boat that would come up that spring, and our bedding and grub as well as the men were in the front wagon; but I usually walked or rode my wheel mule. It was still cold, though it was around March 1st, and the ground was covered with snow, so it took us three days to reach Cheyenne River.

There we lay over one day, resting and visiting with my old friend, Tom Madden, who had moved out from Rapid City and was keeping a store and road ranch. At Madden's we packed all the hay we could get into the trail wagon and put some in the lead wagon, as I wanted plenty of feed for my mules, for I expected to drive them

hard and make the one hundred twenty miles to Fort Pierre in four days, camping out the three nights we would be on the trail.

It was very cold, and the night we camped at Grindstone Buttes I turned the mules loose after giving them some hay and grain. Mules are different from horses and will not go far from the wagons, which, with feed boxes on the sides, are their homes. They wandered off into the timber to get out of the wind, but the next morning, about daylight, they were back at the feed boxes for their grain.

I generally carried a thermometer attached to my wagon, and that morning it was twenty degrees below zero. But I did not mind the cold as I was dressed for it, wearing heavy woolen underwear under a heavy woolen shirt, vest, and pants with my buckskin suit which kept out the wind and kept in the heat of my body. I wore woolen German socks and heavy felt boots and over my buckskin suit I sometimes wore a short buffalo coat which left my legs free and a leather belt ten to twelve inches wide. Such a belt will help a lot to keep a man warm, for it holds his clothing to his body and keeps out the wind. With such clothing, a man can stand very cold weather if he can keep a full stomach, and I usually managed to do that even on the trail, although, on several occasions, conditions made it impossible.

That was the coldest day, I believe, that I ever traveled, but I did not suffer from the cold, as I was walking or riding the mule and so kept moving. The other men,

however, did suffer, and I was really afraid that they would freeze, for they were not dressed for the trail, in such weather, as I was, and they refused to get out of the wagon and walk.

When we reached Mitchell Creek, where we would camp for the night, it was thirty-five below zero and the men were so stupid from the cold they would not move. I turned the mules loose and threw down some hay for them, then got out the shovel and cleaned the snow off the ground where I would make our camp beside the wagons. Then I threw down the beef hides and set them up for a windbreak, but still the men would not get out of the wagon. So I got up and threw them out into the snow, but they just sat there where they fell and went to sleep. I began to wonder what I could do with them, out there alone on the prairie, sixty miles from any ranch with four freezing men.

I began fighting them all, knocking them over, slapping and kicking them, and I must admit I was none too gentle, though I did not want to hurt them. As fast as they got up I shoved them over again, and in a few minutes I had them all so fighting mad they were coming back at me and trying to catch me, so they began to get warm. I had hot coffee ready, and after a few cups of that and some bacon and hard-tack, they were all right, and laughing at the way I had abused them.

We decided to have two men stay up all night to keep the fire going and look after the camp while the others slept. The next day was not quite so cold and we camped

that night at Lance Creek, all of us getting a good sleep, and the following day we reached Fort Pierre.

The cold weather would delay the river boats for several weeks, and I decided to go on down to Yankton and get more mules to replace the team I had sold. But from Fort Pierre we had no trouble, for the trail to Yankton was now well established and ranchmen had built good bunk houses every few miles, where the freighters could stop.

At Pratt Creek we met a number of freighters from Yankton, and after supper and an hour or so of visiting, we turned in and were all nearly asleep when we heard a noise outside, and a worthless white man named Fred Chamberlain and two half-breeds came in, all pretty drunk. They kept up their racket inside the bunk house, and after a while I said, "Fred, I wish you would either go to sleep or get out of here so the rest of us can sleep."

"All right, Zack," he answered, and things quieted down, but I had made up my mind, if they did not, I was going to know why.

One of the Yankton men was a slim, rather mean-looking Frenchman named Nereau, who had the reputation of being a terrible fighter. In the slang of that day, men said, "He could lick his weight in wildcats." And they had good reason for saying it, too, as he had whipped a number of men larger than he and had had most of his front teeth knocked out in his various encounters. About a year before, he had gone out into the country to spend Christmas with the families of his two brothers-in-law

Pat and Jim Noonan. During the festivities they had all been fighting, and Nereau had whipped both the big Irishmen, who had then gone to Yankton and had him arrested for assault and battery.

Nereau was fined and paid it, but as the two Noonans started to drive home, he ran out into the street, jumped into their wagon behind them, and slapped the ears of both men. He rode nearly a block, slapping first one, then the other, and telling them what he would do if they had him arrested again, but they were glad to let him alone and he was not arrested.

That night in the Pratt Creek bunk house, Nereau was lying in his bed on the floor, his pants on but his suspenders down around his hips and barefooted. Before long the drunks began their racket again and he sat up in bed.

"Fret Chamberlain," he said, "eef you an' zem haff-breets don' go to bet an' keep steel, I get up an' feex zat beeg mouf so zat you not open heem for a week."

It sounded like trouble, for we knew Nereau, though he was a slim, lightly put-up fellow, weighing not over one hundred fifty, while Chamberlain was a big man, strong and weighing about one hundred eighty pounds. Chamberlain jumped up, ran to the door, opened it, then called Nereau some vile names and ran outside.

Nereau jumped from his bed, ran out the door, and the row began. I called to Nereau to put on his shoes, and all of us in the house were trying to get on some clothes to go out and see the fun, when Nereau, who had not

waited for shoes, came back in before the others could get outside.

"I teenk dat fellow keep steel now," he remarked, and crawled back into bed.

We went out and found Chamberlain lying in the snow with blood all over him. He was bleeding at the nose and mouth and was a dreadful sight. We called the old ranchman, who washed him up and took him and the half-breeds into the house while the rest of us went to sleep.

At Yankton, I bought more mules and was soon on the back trail, to be ready for the first freight to be unloaded. On the east side of the river, across from Fort Pierre, I found a camper who I learned was named Johnson. I met him several times in the next few years, and later he located at the present town of Highmore which was his home until his death. His son, Royal Johnson, grew up in this place and became a leading attorney, afterward serving as attorney general of the state and as congressman for many years.

By the time I arrived at Joe Kirley's road ranch, the river had broken up, but the crossing was not safe because of the heavy ice flow, still coming down from above the Cheyenne, and I had to wait a week or so before I could get my mules across on the flatboat. Kirley and the old Frenchman, Napoleon Ducheneaux, ferried teams and wagons across the river with an old-fashioned flatboat.

It would be very old-fashioned now, but in 1880 was a common way of getting across streams which were too deep to ford and too wide to bridge. The boat was about

thirty feet long by twelve feet wide with a railing all around, but the ends could be opened for loading and unloading. On each side was an oar or sweep. To cross the river, a horse was hitched to the end of the boat, and, walking along the bank, pulled the boat up the river a mile or so. Then the horse was taken on the boat and it was allowed to float downstream while the sweeps were worked much as oars propel a rowboat, but the men walked along the boat the distance the handle of the oar moved instead of bending to reach it as on a small boat.

The current carried the boat downstream and the sweeps pulled it across. Then on the opposite side of the stream, the horse was put on the bank to pull the boat upstream again and the same performance was repeated. This boat would carry two wagons and two teams and the fare was five dollars for a team and wagon. But it was slow work at Fort Pierre, where the river is nearly a mile wide, and the boat could make only two trips a day.

While waiting for the boat to cross and also for freight to come, I spent most of my time at Fort Pierre, for the business of the settlement was all done on the west side of the river. A number of families from Yankton had moved up here, as there was lots of work for blacksmiths, harness makers, wagon makers, etc., as the freighting had developed with the settlement and mining in the Black Hills.

Many of these families I had known in Yankton, and one, the West family, had been through pioneer days and

Indian trouble in Minnesota before coming to Dakota. Mr. West was a wagon maker and had a shop there, while Mrs. West and the daughters kept a boarding house which was the nearest thing to home some of us knew for many years. Mrs. West was "Aunt Mary" to all and was as ready to scold us for our faults as to serve us our meals, but she was just as ready to praise us for any good we did. Women like "Aunty West" were scattered over the great prairies, radiating a Christian influence in wild mining camps and trading posts. She spent the greater part of her life on the frontier, and at the age of seventy filed on a homestead in Lyman County, South Dakota.

The children and grandchildren of these boys she had mothered knew and loved this splendid woman, and when I saw her last, at the age of ninety, she was as happy and cheerful as in her youth, still looking on the fast changing world about her in 1926 with the same optimistic eyes she had had for the wild days of the '70's along the Missouri River.

One day Joe Reed, who had a ranch about fifteen miles east, came to get Miss Addie West to stay with Mrs. Reed who was sick, and they were going across the river in a rowboat which was much quicker than the ferry. A man who was called "Deaf Frank" carried passengers in his skiff, and I was going across with them to Kirley's, as I thought I could get the mules across in a day or two. A high wind was blowing from the northwest, and we had to row a good half mile up the river from the landing

to go around a sand bar which lay directly between the landing places on each side.

A good-sized island was about a half mile above the Fort Pierre landing and gave us protection from the wind on the row upstream. But when we started to go across, the full force of the wind hit us and sent waves rolling high around and over the little boat. We told Frank, "Keep her headed upstream and let her drift across," for the wind would blow us in that direction if he could keep the prow toward the wind.

Every few minutes, the boatman would say, "I'm afraid I can't hold her." But I knew there was no danger if he did not let the boat get into the trough of the waves. I knew we had crossed far enough to be near the head of the sand bar, but even if the water might not have been deep, it was too cold to make swimming pleasant and I did not relish the thought of such an icy plunge. Still, in spite of Frank's efforts, the boat swung to the side and we were soon in the trough with the waves rolling high above us for a second before they broke over the little skiff and filled it with water.

Reed and I had jumped when we saw the boat was going down and I had pulled Miss West out after me. I told her to hold to me and I kept hold of the boat, but I found the water was only about five feet deep and came up just to her chin. The boatman had dropped one oar and I caught it as it floated past. I stuck it into the sand for her and Frank to hold to. Reed was a big man, weighing about two hundred sixty pounds and strong as an ox

and together we lifted that boat out of the water and turned it upside down to get the water out, then set it down again. We put Miss West into the boat and let it float downstream several hundred feet toward another island, the men wading till the water above the sand bar was only about three feet deep.

But we still had to cross the deep water east of the bar, so we got in and I took the oars, keeping the boat headed upstream and letting it drift to the east bank. I had wanted to take the oars when we started, but Frank would not agree to it and I could not insist, as it was his boat. We were a sorry-looking bunch when we reached Kirley's, but we all stayed there that night and got rested while our clothes dried out.

In a few days I got my teams across, and by that time the boats had brought up freight, so I loaded and went to the Hills. At Fort Pierre, I had met Harry Endicott, a young man whom I had known in Yankton and he had a load of goods which he was taking into Deadwood. Johnson had waited till I was ready to go and the three of us made the trip together. At Cheyenne River, Tom Madden wanted us to buy his buildings and feed corral, so we got his price and talked over the proposition the rest of the trip.

Endicott and I decided it was a good thing to operate a store and road ranch at Cheyenne, combining with a feed yard for freight outfits, so at Deadwood we sold our mules and wagons to two young men named Sibley, who were cousins and had come out from Massachusetts.

We bought two good horses and saddles and lumber for a house sixteen by thirty feet with a lean-to fourteen by sixteen feet, and this lumber we loaded on a bull train going to Fort Pierre which would take our goods as far as the river. We got an old fellow named Mitchell to help us build the house, and after the building was finished he stayed with us, doing odd jobs around the ranch for his board.

After we got the house built, we used one end of the main building for a storeroom and the other end for a living room while the lean-to served as kitchen and dining room. The old log building we had got from Madden we took for an ice house the next winter. Then we hauled logs for a large corral, standing them on end as close together as possible to afford protection for the stock from the wind and storms, and for ourselves in case of an attack from the Indians. Although the Sioux had been quiet for years, one could never be certain how long they would continue so or when they would become dissatisfied on the reservations and go on the warpath, so it paid to be well prepared for such an emergency while we hoped it would never come.

When our buildings were finished, I went to Fort Pierre after goods for the store, and during that summer we had good business and made money. Endicott was cook with the assistance of Mitchell and looked after the store and ranch. I was the outside man, buying the goods and putting up hay for the freighters to use during the winter. A man named Smith had located a ranch about

a half mile down the river from us and we put up hay together, each party furnishing one man and one team and stacking about one hundred tons. Then Endicott and I bought all the hay we could get from other settlers, paying five dollars a ton delivered at our ranch.

Life was moving along very pleasantly and quietly and I began to think I had settled down—that I had quit the trail and the hard life I had led on the plains for ten or twelve years. It was part of my duties to keep the table supplied with game, and when I had no work at the ranch or on buying trips I spent many days in the saddle, riding to neighboring ranches or on errands, and always my old Sharp's rifle hung on the saddle horn.

The heat that summer was intense and at one time the thermometer registered one hundred twenty-two degrees. Another day a man and I were riding to find a place to cut hay and our dog, which had followed me, died from the heat. We were visited by hard rains and disastrous storms several times during the summer and once the Cheyenne was so high the freight outfits could not get across and a number of them had to camp on the east side for several days. One day I went across six times to take food and supplies, for I had a horse which was a good swimmer and he was not afraid to go into the high water. But he had a mean habit of shaking himself as soon as he felt the ground under his feet, just like a dog does when he comes out of the water.

That night about midnight we heard a hammering on our door and got up to find Calamity Jane and a livery-

man from Rapid. Jane said that the United States marshal was after her for selling whisky without a government license and wanted us to hide her. We told her we could not do that and would not do anything to get ourselves into trouble with the officers, but the best thing she could do would be to get across the river and go on east. She could stay all night at the bull camp and they would give her a horse to get to Fort Pierre.

Calamity Jane had a world of friends among these rough men, who would have fought to the end to help her out of any scrape. In spite of the hard life she lived, she had unexpected womanly traits and was the first to help a pilgrim family in distress or to nurse a sick miner or freighter. After the fire in Deadwood, she nursed and cared for the sick and homeless like a Sister of Mercy or a Salvation Army girl, but she was frequently in the hands of the law or making an escape.

Any attempt to describe this picturesque character whose name is everywhere an echo of the old frontier days is certain to fall short of the truth, for she was a strange mixture of masculine boldness and feminine gentleness. Stories about her can be told, most of them probably true, to prove she was any kind of person one wants to call her. She was seldom found around the dance halls or sporting houses which follow so closely the development of a new mining camp, but spent most of her life with some freighter on the trail or keeping house for some ranchman or stock tender at a stage station. She lived before the days of "affinities" and "companionate mar-

riages," but these terms could well be used to describe the relations she assumed throughout her life.

I told Jane I would give her my horse to take her across the river if she wanted to swim him over and she said she could go any place that I could, so I got the horse out and went down to the river bank with her. I called to the boys in the camps and some of them came down to the bank with a lantern. I told her not to try to guide him, but to let him have a free rein and he would take her across but to look out when he started to go out of the water. She rode in and soon there was no sound of his splashing, but before long I knew she had reached the other side, for I could hear Jane swearing and knew the horse was shaking off the water.

In a few minutes the horse was back on the west side, and soon after I had put him away and gone to the house, the marshal drove up with another livery team and driver. They did not find Jane, but they saw the man there who had brought her and asked me if Jane was there. I said no, but he insinuated that I was hiding her and I told him not to accuse me of that or there would be a sorry marshal around there. He cooled off and admitted he had been provoked by her escape. So I told him she had got across the river and he could have my horse for five dollars to swim him across the same as Jane had done, but unless he was looking for trouble and was ready to report to St. Peter, he had better not go over to take her away from that gang of bullwhackers. Harry got them some supper and the marshal and his driver went to bed.

The next morning he went down to the river bank and called across to the bull camps. He asked if Jane was there and they told him no. Then he asked where she was and they said he could go to hell before they'd tell him. But instead of taking the trip they had suggested, he went back to Rapid City. When I went across later, they told me she had taken a horse early in the morning and gone toward Fort Pierre.

During the summer, Endicott and I had reason to think we had made a wise move in locating where and when we did, for it seemed very likely that the North Western Railroad would build to the Hills. Work was already being done in the eastern part of the territory, and the general talk was that by winter they would be delivering freight by rail at the Missouri River. But it was common opinion that the railroad would cross somewhere near old Fort George, where a bridge could be built easier than at Fort Pierre, and where the hills which outline this river afforded a better route on each side of the crossing.

In the latter part of July, Irish, the chief engineer of the North Western, came to our place, where he got horses to ride over the surrounding country and took me with him to select a possible route and crossing at the Cheyenne. It seemed that the old frontier days were passing into history, for the building of railroads meant the coming of settlers and the placing of the Indians on smaller reservations, as it had been proven that they could not use the great region they had been given in the various earlier treaties.

The United States Government extended their telegraph line from Fort Sully to the Hills in 1880 and Cheyenne River had a station. Two enlisted men were kept there and boarded with us, one remaining at the ranch and the other riding along the line to keep the wires up and in order. With this connection, we felt close to the outside world, for any news of general interest reached us in a short time.

East of the Cheyenne was still a Sioux reservation, but a number of men and some families had settled along streams and creeks on the west of the river and were starting cattle and horse ranches, so we had neighbors, though we did not see them very often. They came for miles around, though, whenever any one was sick, for Endicott was a trained druggist. We kept a full stock of necessary medicines, and Harry was often called to prescribe for, as well as compound for, his clients.

That fall, the old man who was living with us took sick, and before his death told Harry and me a strange story. In the late '20's, there had been a great deal of excitement in New York State and throughout the entire East over the disappearance of William Morgan. Morgan had had some trouble with the Masons and had exposed, or threatened to expose, the secrets of the order. Shortly after this time, he had disappeared and the Masons were blamed for having done away with him. Feeling over this incident ran high and spread throughout the country till a political party was organized which figured in more than

one election, but the Antimasons were finally absorbed into the older parties as new issues developed.

Mitchell gave us the story of the trouble in detail, but I have forgotten the minor events in the fifty years since he related them. He said he had been one of a party which had taken Morgan out on Lake Ontario and thrown him into the lake to drown, but the body was never found and only the few men concerned in his removal had ever known what had befallen him. After this, feeling had been so aroused that Mitchell had left New York, and, taking another name, had spent the rest of his life in the West. He made us promise not to expose his identity or tell the location of his grave and we buried him at night, where a new grave would not be found by the wolves, and left him there, another unknown grave on the prairie.

As to the truth of his story I have nothing to say, either as to his identity or as to the fate of Morgan. But it could easily have been true just as the old man told us, for the West in those days was the haven for refugees and derelicts of every sort—many fleeing from punishment and others from an unhappy past. But the West asked no questions about a man's past and received every one on an equal footing until he proved himself worthy of respect or a nuisance in the community.

The bad men seldom lasted very long, and the tales of the James and Younger gang, Wild Bill, Billy the Kid, Captain Slade, and others of that kind are based on a wild but brief career. Dance halls, saloons, gambling tables, and bad men were prompt to arrive in those days where

money was plentiful and law was scarce, just as they are prompt to arrive to-day in any new oil field, but like any swarm of pests they have their brief day and pass on to new fields or submit to control and become quiet.

The mule skinners and bullwhackers and miners lived hard, rough lives and often made a lot of excitement in a town when they got in from a trip and were having fun. But they were seldom lawbreakers, and what furniture they broke up was paid for afterward by their boss or his foreman and taken out of their wages. In the mining camps and freight stations of those days, men worked hard and played hard, but back of their noise were the men and women, decent, respectable, law-abiding, and law-enforcing, who carried on the business and laid the foundations for permanent settlements with homes, schools, churches, and organized society.

Sometimes a bad man would arrive or some freighter get ambitious for notoriety as a desperado and run wild for a while, but before long he quieted down or moved. If he were not able to adapt himself to the coming of law and order, he usually moved farther west or to some newer camp. Sometimes he delayed his departure too long and was visited by the Vigilantes, who either escorted him out of the camp or, as in same cases, left him hanging to a tree.

There are still a number of men and women living in the Dakotas and scattered throughout the nation who lived through the frontier and pioneer days and saw the plains of the Indian developed into the fertile farms and

prosperous towns of to-day. Some of the younger men who went into the Hills with the gold rush of 1875, 1876, and 1877 are still living after many years of activity in the business and political life of the territory and later of the state. But not one of these lived a lawless or lurid life. The gamblers, the saloon keepers, the dance-hall girls, and the bad men did not endure the hardships, as did the people who built up the country, nor did they live to see a fine state build schools and colleges and contribute to the progress of our country.

The one exception which I recall was a young man who opened a saloon at Pierre when that was a busy railroad terminus. The title of saloon keeper did not carry the same stigma along the Missouri in 1880 that it had in later days, and this man saw an opportunity to make some money while supplying the thirsty citizens with their favorite beverages. However, the opening was attended with more success and by a different crowd than he had expected, so that a free-for-all was the main part of the entertainment and the proprietor decided that a saloon was too wild a business for him. The next day after the celebration he locked the place up and quit.

Some of the people in the town said it was because he had received word that his wife would arrive on the next boat, but I knew the lady then and have been acquainted with the family for years and I have never observed any inclination on her part to dictate in her husband's business affairs.

However, this excursion into a new field seemed to have

no lasting bad effects, and the family were among the prominent citizens in the development of the state.

The toughs and desperadoes gave the West a lurid atmosphere, but all the time progress was moving along as the current of a stream carries the rich sediment deep below the surface while the froth moves along on top and attracts more attention.

CHAPTER XVIII

PIERRE IS LOCATED

THE Milwaukee and North Western railroads had both reached the Missouri in the fall of 1880 and were hauling freight to Pierre and Chamberlain. Nearly all the land east of that river had been opened for homesteads and people of every sort and from every part of the country rushed in to get the free land. New towns sprang up almost overnight and we "old-timers" could see settlements pushing back the frontier and farms dotting the old Indian reservations even to the Black Hills. Already squatters were locating ranches and feeding their cattle on government land, or rather on land which had been reserved for the Indians but for which that people had no use.

This wave of progress brought a different class of people into the territory, which before had been unsettled. These were men with families who built homes and schools and churches instead of the miners and freighters who lived on the trail and always expected to go back home in the East some time.

After several preliminary surveys, the North Western had abandoned the plan of crossing the Missouri at old Fort George, although it had built to the river opposite that point. Instead it turned northwest and followed up the river to the flat opposite Fort Pierre. This was the end

of the road for twenty-five years, although during all that time a road to the Black Hills was the dream which this city hoped to realize.

A French trapper, Napoleon Ducheneaux, had lived in this vicinity for several years before, but built his first house within the present city limits of Pierre in January or February of 1877 when I left some of my cattle and men there and they helped build the house. A little later, Joe Kirley settled about a half mile down the river, and these two men ran a flatboat across the river for several years. After the railroad reached this point, it built large warehouses, and the freighting which had centered at Fort Pierre now helped build up another town. But there was a new element active in the building of the new town, for homesteaders were locating all around it and the business men and others who moved there were not of the frontier type, although some of them had seen many hardships in the West before locating at Pierre.

Among the first to come in was J. D. Hilger, who had pioneered in Minnesota as early as 1867. In that year he had carried mail on horseback, two hundred sixty miles from Henderson, Minnesota, to Sisseton, Dakota Territory, across an open prairie. There was no road and he kept his directions with the aid of a compass, fording rivers and lake beds. On one trip he was five days without a bite to eat, but as he said, "had the saddle horn to brace me up."

There was no dwelling along the route till Brown Valley near the end of the trail and no living thing to be

seen save wolves, coyotes, and foxes. When the ice on the sloughs and streams froze too hard for fording, Hilger quit the mail-carrying and returned to his home in the eastern part of the state.

But it is hard for a man to resist the appeal of the frontier life when he has once had a taste of it, and in 1877 Hilger went with an ox train from Bismarck to Miles City, Montana, following the Missouri to Fort Buford, where it is joined by the Yellowstone, and then going up that river to Fort Keogh. During the trip, the men could see the signal fires which were lighted after dark by hostile Indians on all sides of them, for this was less than a year after the battle with Custer on the Little Big Horn and many of the Sioux who took part in that trouble had not returned to their reservations. Sitting Bull was still in Canada with his band and his sympathizers traveled back and forth across eastern Montana. The Hilger people were not molested, but later, in November, a band of hostiles raided their hay camp at Glendive and stampeded all their horses. The owners followed them and Hilger recovered all of his, but others in the camp lost nine head.

Fort Keogh was a roaring river town and had its share of bad men and others, whose deeds or habits supplied the foundation for some descriptive names. One met Liver-eating Johnson, Camp Kettle Billy, Hickory Bill, Rattlesnake Dan, Fly-speck Kelly, Crackerbox Dan, and many others whose names were familiar along the Missouri and in Western mining camps. Buffalo Bill was at Keogh part

of the time and Calamity Jane was in and out of the camp, as she came and went with the freight trains. Many of these characters went to Pierre in the wild days of its youth, for they frequently had reason to seek newer fields and rushed to any new town that was started.

Hilger had squatted on a quarter section of land, part of which is in the present city of Miles City, and had written for Mrs. Hilger to go by rail to Bismarck and by steamboat to Fort Keogh, but she had a small son one year old and hesitated to take a baby into such a far-off settlement in addition to fearing the Indians during that time. Hilger said: "I had my choice to stick to the land and abandon my wife and son or vice versa. I chose the latter, but did persuade her to come to Bismarck with me the next year and in 1880 we moved to Pierre."

At this new town Hilger opened the first store, and he is credited with having given the name Pierre to the village. During my trips to buy goods for our store at Cheyenne Crossing, I became acquainted with Mr. Hilger; and perhaps our travels over much the same country gave us a common interest, for we have remained close friends ever since. In a recent letter, he tells of our first meeting.

"Now, old friend Zack, it was forty-eight years ago when you entered my store in June, and stated that you were located on the Cheyenne River Crossing on the Black Hills Trail and that you wanted some blankets, clothes, and other things which you selected and requested me to lay aside till the next morning, when you would be ready to return to your ranch. I said 'O.K.' But

the next morning you came in somewhat perturbed and stated you had been robbed the night before in your hotel of every cent you had—some one hundred forty dollars. You had found your vest which had contained the money in the brush near Bad River. You said you needed the clothing and blankets and if I would trust you you would send the cash with the mail carrier, O.K. In about ten days the M. C. stepped in and handed me the twenty-five dollars. We have been fast friends since that time."

The main business street of the town, at first, faced the Missouri and extended up and down the river from Kirley's landing which was the beginning of what to-day is Main Street. After the brick buildings began to replace the first structures, the business houses moved back toward higher land, leaving the river street the location of saloons, dance houses, gambling rooms, and such places of amusement.

Some of the men who came when the town was a wild West river landing are still in business there, though most of them have taken the long trail. Among the citizens who brought in a new order and established local government were Anson and John Hilger, P. F. McClure, W. H. Gleckler, M. Kerr, M. J. Schubert, B. C. Ash, H. E. Cutting, and C. C. Bennett.

The new town was not without its notorious characters as well, and such names as Bismarck Annie, Long Joe, Black Dick, and Arkansas were well known along Sioux Avenue. Calamity Jane was a frequent visitor. But be-

fore long the better citizens were prompted to take law enforcement into their own hands and a Vigilance Committee was organized. The final display of outlawry which had decided the forming of such a committee was Arkansas's "shooting up the town."

Arkansas had been a bullwhacker on the Black Hills Trail for years without gaining any notoriety, but after he had whipped the bully of the Missouri River he got the idea that he was a "bad man" and from then on used his gun whenever any excuse was presented. On one occasion, he had undertaken to prove the extent of his wickedness by a display of his utter disregard for his company when he wanted to shoot. There were no casualties, but the better citizens decided that such displays were too wild for them to appreciate and not in keeping with the character of the town they were building, so the Vigilance Committee was organized, whose first act was to send word to Arkansas that his presence was not wanted at Pierre and for him to stay away.

Arkansas came to our store a short time after we had heard about the committee and he thought it was a joke. We told him he had better stay away, for I knew some of the men in Pierre and understood that they meant business. They had had enough of the wild West days, and unless he meant to keep quiet and behave he had better not go across the river. He agreed with me then, but when he got to Fort Pierre and got a few drinks of rotten whisky and his pals had laughed at him for being bluffed out, he threw caution away. He not only went

across to Pierre but took the trouble to send word to the committee that he was coming.

He was in Long Joe's saloon a short distance from the river, when some friends told him he had better be careful, for they had seen men moving around the place with guns. Arkansas ran out and toward the river, but was followed by a charge of buckshot which ended the career of another desperado. Some one said there were so many shot in his body he could not have carried them in a sack on his shoulder.

After Arkansas's removal, more quiet days followed for Pierre, as many of the worst offenders found the climate unhealthy and departed while the others became more orderly.

The unusual weather which had prevailed during the summer of 1880 continued into the fall and winter. The first snow fell about the middle of October but soon melted, though it made good hunting, for tracking deer and antelope was easy in the soft blanket which covered the hills and prairie.

The next snow began on November 20th and fell steadily for sixty hours till the prairie was covered to a depth of two to three feet on the level. In the draws, the drifts were so deep a horse could not get through, for he would sink down to his body. I had a big rangy buckskin that weighed eleven hundred fifty pounds and I had often ridden him to Deadwood, eighty miles, in one day, so he was used to all kinds of trails, but that winter I had to carry a shovel whenever I rode and frequently

had to dismount and shovel the snow away to get him out of a drift. A telegram came for a man living about four miles from us, telling of his brother's death, and I thought he should have the message, but I was all day getting to his ranch, where I spent the night and made the return the following day.

My old friend, John Tennis, with whom I had hunted buffalo in 1867 in Kansas and had trapped in Colorado in 1868, came to spend the winter with us and was a welcome guest, as he was a skillful hunter and kept us supplied with meat for our table and also to sell. I had not seen him since I had left him in Utah, for he had gone into Idaho and from there on west to the coast, while I had been along the Missouri most of those years we had been apart.

The deer and antelope could get nothing to eat on the prairie because of the deep snow and came into the Cheyenne valley by hundreds, as they could get some feed in the ravines and bark from trees and bushes along the river. Any one could kill from ten to twenty-five deer a day and Tennis who was a dead shot had no trouble killing more than we could use, with the same old Sharp's rifle he had carried in Kansas to kill buffalo. On one trip, he shot fifty-two deer in two days and hung them up while he returned to the ranch and got horses. We brought them back and hung them on the north side of the building and let them freeze. Tennis sold over half of them, but the rest he contributed to the camp as his share of the provisions.

He skinned the deer and sent the hides to Crook City to be tanned by an oil process which would prevent them from getting hard and shrinking as the hides did which the Indians tanned by smoking. At that time, there was a tailor in Crook City who had a reputation throughout the West and especially in the Hills for his buckskin suits and he bought all the hides, so John had good returns from his hunting in addition to being popular at the ranch on account of the good eating he supplied.

The cattle which had been put on the range suffered that winter, for they were expected to feed on the grass and no hay was put up for them nor were they herded or hunted up till the spring round-up. The feed they should have had was buried under the snow and the trails to water were so blocked by the drifts that they had to lick the snow for moisture. These range cattle perished by the thousands and even the bull trains lost heavily, for they could neither get feed on the prairie nor travel through the snow to camps where hay could be supplied for them.

Although Fort Pierre was the nearest point at which freight for the Hills could be loaded, very little freighting was done from there during the winter, as the freight had to be taken up the river by boats and the boats stopped running in the fall, so what freight they brought on the last trips was soon delivered. Most of the hauling from Fort Pierre was done with ox teams, which could not travel so well in winter when the snow was deep and they could not feed along the trail. Oxen travel slower,

and to carry enough feed for them would make so much of the loads they could haul that there would be very little profit.

After the river closed, freight was shipped to some town on the railroad, Bismarck, Cheyenne, or Sidney, and hauled in by mule teams, which were more expensive to feed but took less time on the trip. The bull outfits were usually taken off during the winter and herded around Fort Pierre by one or two men, while the rest of the whackers were discharged. Then in the spring, when the boats began delivering goods, the bull outfits were got ready to haul it.

A number of these outfits were caught by the deep snow coming so early on the trail or in the Hills, where hay was scarce and expensive, and camped all winter on the Cheyenne. We sold them hay and provisions and the hard winter should have been an ill wind which blew good to us. We did a good business and would have made a lot of money, had we been able to get the pay for the goods we sold.

The hay which we had stacked at the ranch was soon used and then we had to break a trail to the stacks on the prairie. It was only five miles, but one of the freight-outfit foremen and myself spent a whole day picking out a trail which the cattle would be able to get through and breaking it with our horses. Then the bulls followed one after the other out to the hay and had to stay there, as it was too far back for them to go for water and they lived on hay and snow.

We sold nearly three thousand dollars' worth of goods on credit, the outfits promising us they would pay when they made the first trip with freight in the spring.

But when they returned to Fort Pierre, the owners of the bull trains organized what they called "A Bull Union" to raise the price of hauling. The transportation companies had agreed to deliver freight at Deadwood and other camps in the Hills for a certain amount and could not pay the advanced freight rates. The result was, the companies bought out some of the bull trains which were priced reasonably and also put on mule outfits to replace the others. Some of the outfits were not sold, but were taken off the trail to the owners' ranches; and others went into Idaho, where there was plenty of hauling from Salt Lake to the camps in the mountains. Some of the owners paid us for our goods and hay, but others never paid and we lost about fifteen hundred dollars.

The ice on the Missouri was over thirty inches thick and held long after the usual time for the river to break up. Then a warm wind called a chinook came from the west and melted the snow in the Black Hills and the western plains within a few days, so that the water poured down the Cheyenne, the Moreau, and the Grand rivers and every other stream flowing into the Missouri with such a rush that the ice was lifted over the banks and carried out onto the prairie.

Pierre and Fort Pierre were both under water, as were most of the river towns. At Pierre, the sand had drifted and brush grown up on it along the immediate river bank,

so that a natural levee had been formed which was several feet higher than the flat between the river bank and the bluffs. Ditches had to be dug to drain the water from the flat after the river had fallen, and these ditches remained for many years—reminders of an earlier misfortune.

At Yankton, several boats had been drawn up onto the bank in the fall but not tied. When the ice was lifted over the bank, the force of the ice and water took these boats off the blocks, and in one case a boat was carried several miles away from the landing. Then the water receded and left it there, too far away from the river to be returned without excessive cost, so it was dismantled and what could be used was hauled away but the rest was left there where it had drifted.

The whole river channel was changed at Vermilion, and settlers who had lived on the east side of the river in Dakota, after the flood found their farms were on the west side in Nebraska, as the river was the boundary line.

But the ill wind which had blown trouble for the stockmen and freighters and for the towns along the river did blow some good, after all, for the deep snow filled all the lakes and lake beds which had been dry for years and gave the ground a thorough soaking. The spring and summer of 1881 saw the whole territory prosperous. There was good pasture and plenty of hay to be cut. What land was cultivated had plenty of moisture and produced fine crops. In fact, the ground was so saturated that for the next year or two it still showed the benefit of the deep snows in its fertility.

During the time I was located at Cheyenne River, I became acquainted with a young man whom I had met several times in the Hills and on the trail or at Fort Pierre, but had not come to know till he came to be a frequent guest at our road ranch.

W. H. Frost left Jackson County, Iowa, in April, 1875, and with his brother-in-law drove to Sioux City, where they expected to join the Witcher party and go into the Black Hills across northern Nebraska. But Witcher had started about a week before Frost reached Sioux City, and he did not overtake them till he reached Elk Horn Creek, where they were waiting, in camp, for the Hills country to be opened for prospectors. After dodging Indians and soldiers, the party camped on Friday, July 16th, on French Creek, near the present site of Custer City, where we had found the most gold when Custer explored this region the summer before. The next day the camp moved on to Spring Creek and the men located claims.

During the summer of 1875 Professor Jenny had been sent into the Hills by the government to make a geologic survey and an escort of soldiers accompanied him. On July 29th, one of the soldiers from the Jenny escort served notice on all campers that all miners in the Black Hills and on the reservation must be out by August 15th, or they would be taken out. So on August 15th, the Witcher party was taken out under military escort and turned loose at Fort Laramie.

Frost stayed in Cheyenne till February, 1876, then

went back into the Hills where he located a claim but later traded his interest for a horse and went to work, cutting logs for the sawmill. When the work was finished, the man who had the contract had drawn all the money for the work and had used it to buy provisions, so had nothing to pay the men. He owned about six yoke of oxen, so he loaded his wagons with beef hides and told his men: "Boys, I can't pay you for your work here, but if you want to go to Yankton with me, I'll feed and take care of you while you are there. Then I'll give you a team to drive back and pay your wages."

This was in December, 1876, and as the men had no money and there was no work to be done in the Hills that winter, there was nothing for them to do but accept his offer. That was about the time I was taking Gardner Brothers' outfit from Yankton and we met the Marshall train a day or two before we reached Fort Pierre.

Frost returned to the Hills and for a number of years was on the Fort Pierre Trail. At the time Endicott and I had the store and ranch at Cheyenne River, he was in charge of the La Plant bull train, and his frequent stops with us as he took the outfit back and forth to the Hills gave me an opportunity to know him better than I had from our many chance meetings and to learn about his earlier trips with Witcher. When the wagon trains were taken out of service, Billy Frost located at Fort Pierre, where he still resides and has been active in business and political development since that time.

After the trouble among the owners of the stage line between the Hills and Fort Pierre, in the fall of 1877, the mail was carried on horseback, for there was not enough travel except during the time the boats could come up the river to pay for coaches, teams, and drivers to be kept at the different stations. But with the railroad running trains on a schedule, these troubles were overcome and the Northwestern Transportation Company put on a line in 1881. The stage made three trips a week, so Cheyenne River had more business than before and we had our plans for a busy town when the railroad built west, as every one supposed it would in a year or so. Endicott filed a homestead entry on the land where we were located and we expected to be the owners of a town site.

But the rush of new settlers stopped at the river with the railroad and comparatively few ranches were located along the Black Hills Trail, for no filings could be made on any of the land which was then still a part of the Sioux Reservation. The freighters prospered, however, for the haul was much shorter from Pierre than from any other railroad point and most of the supplies for the Hills were taken over this route.

Several new outfits were put into service, for the Hills was still the busiest and most productive part of the middle West, and as the mines were developed, needed more than the grub, clothing, and camp equipment of the prospectors. The Homestake, Father De Smet, and Sitting Bull mines were operating on a large scale and using a lot of machinery, all of which had to go in by freight wagons.

In 1880 and 1881, the Homestake took in flat cars, engines, and rails for about twenty miles of road. The wooden parts were all made in the Hills, but the rest was taken overland in parts and assembled in Deadwood. The stamp mills and every piece of machinery that was used were taken in the same way.

The Fort Pierre Trail was now busier than it had ever been and continued so till 1885, when the North Western completed the Elk Horn branch from Sioux City and all freight went over that road. Then the bull trains were taken off the road and the drivers had to find new employment, for their day had passed, never to return. Along with them went much of the picturesque life of the Hills and many peculiar characters who have since appeared in stories of the Great West. And with them went the hopes of Dakota to see railroads built west from Pierre and Chamberlain.

The bull trains were not all that the railroads destroyed on the Black Hills Trail. Much of the romantic interest disappeared as a part of American life, for here the Last Frontier was replaced by organized society with homes, schools, laws, and churches.

CHAPTER XIX

A NEW TRAIL TO CHAMBERLAIN

THE North Western Railroad and the Northwestern Transportation Company had formed an agreement to handle all the freight for the Hills which came to Pierre. That shut out a number of outfits, but they were all right as long as the boats could navigate the river and deliver their freight to Fort Pierre, but they had to lie idle during the winter. The Milwaukee was competing with the North Western for freight from Chicago and was willing to pay the freighters in proportion to the longer haul they would have from Chamberlain, which was fifty miles farther from Cheyenne River than Pierre.

But no trail had ever been laid out to Chamberlain, so in the fall of 1881 Fred T. Evans, who owned a big outfit, took me with him to inspect the White River country and lay out a route which the first freight teams could follow. We struck southeast toward the Bad Lands and followed the divide east between the White and the Bad rivers. When the Milwaukee finally built to the Hills, it took about the same route we had laid out twenty-five years before, as far as Quinn, then went farther west than we did and crossed the Cheyenne farther up than where our ranch had been.

During the summer, Endicott and I had taken a new member into our partnership, as the increase of business

had meant more work, too, both at the ranch and outside, and we had a man and his wife working for us. While I was away with Evans, a beef had been killed and used in the kitchen. The new member said he had bought it and killed it for the ranch, so charged one-third of the cost to each of us. That was all right if it had been true.

But one day not long after I returned from Chamberlain, I was up at our old ranch which was about two miles above the new crossing which had been located by the Northwestern Transportation Company when they took over the freighting from Pierre. My staghound was with me as usual when I rode and I discovered him digging up something out of a trash pile by the old corral. I went to see what it was and found the entrails of a beef. I began a careful inspection and saw traces of blood on the corral. Then I looked outside and found a man's track in the sand.

I followed the track down to the river two or three hundred yards through the brush, and there, close to the bank, I saw the head of an animal in the river but weighted down. I got it out and found one horn was burnt with a letter "E," which was the brand on the bulls of the Fred T. Evans outfit. He had left some cattle there in the spring because they were poor and run down, but on the fine feed during the summer they had fattened and were in good shape. I explored further, and near the place where I had found the head I found the hide, also weighted down.

I returned to the ranch and told what I had seen but made no charges, letting the other men draw their own conclusions. Our new partner got rather excited and ugly, accusing me of being out hunting trouble. I concluded he would soon own the whole place if he was going to steal cattle to sell to us. So I told him one of us had to get out, that I would give or take so much, but I did not intend to be strung up to a cottonwood tree for an old bull, as I had seen a number of men hanging. He wanted to buy, so I sold my interest and went back on the trail with the old Jewett and Dickinson outfit.

When I took charge of their train, they had one hundred ten head of mules and between twenty and twenty-five wagons. Some of the mules were fine young animals, but many of them were getting old, as part of this outfit had been in the Pratt and Faris freight train, which was one of the oldest outfits in the West, having been on the trail to the Red Cloud Agency as far back as 1868. The pet of the train was an old gray mare that had run with the mules for fifteen years. Nearly every year she raised a colt, and she was then the mother of a small herd of good horses which we used for saddle horses. The night-herd horse was her colt, the saddle horse I rode was her colt, and there were three or four more colts which followed her. As soon as the train stopped for the night, I put a bell on Nellie, and the mules stayed with her, so we had no trouble finding them in the morning. When the stock was brought in to the corral—the wagons driven into a circle—I caught her and tied her to a wagon and

she was led during the day while the ten or twelve head of extra mules and the saddle horses followed her.

I had been with the outfit but a short time when it was sold to Bramble and Miner. We loaded at Galena, a few miles east and south of Deadwood, with bullion from the Sitting Bull Mine. There were ten teams with ten mules to a team and they drew two or three wagons, moving seventy-five tons of metal, about fifteen thousand pounds to a team. We were headed for Chamberlain, two hundred fifty miles east, and Bramble wanted us to go over the trail which Fred Evans and I had laid out the previous autumn.

A few trains had already gone over it, but none with heavy loads, such as ours. I wanted to go around by Pierre and down the east side of the river. The new trail would be all right if the ground stayed frozen, but it was then about the first of February, so a thaw was due at any time and I did not like to risk it. I told Bramble that I would never get through on the new route unless the weather stayed cold, and we could scarcely expect cold weather to continue for the next fifteen days which the trip would take.

The old trail was only about a day's drive farther and I would have old roads all the way and ranches where I could get feed for my men and hay for my mules, if a storm should strike us. I thought I could make Pierre in eight days and cross before the ice broke up, but he did not agree to my plan and told me to go to Cheyenne

Crossing and then see what the weather condition was by that time.

We made the eighty miles to Cheyenne River in three days and from there we had one hundred ninety miles of good road by way of Pierre or one hundred seventy miles and no road to deliver the loads at Chamberlain. From the Cheyenne, I wired to Bramble that I thought it best to go by Pierre, but he wired back for me to take the new road direct to the Milwaukee, that the United States Weather Bureau had forecast cold weather, and as there was little snow on the prairie we would have plenty of grass for our mules. So there was nothing for us to do but strike out over the prairie.

We had already had one or two accidents before we got out of the Hills. The drivers rode the left-wheel mules and guided the team with one rein about two inches wide which ran to the bridle of the left-lead mule. One hill had been very steep and one of the teams had not been able to hold their load back even with the rough locks on. The driver had feared the load would crowd down onto the mules and he had jumped off his saddle and run to his mule's head. This had pulled the saddle mule off the trail and to the left, swinging the wagon tongue that way and the wagon jammed against a pine tree.

The rest of his team were on the right side of the tree and there was small chance of pulling the loads back and up the hill to go around the tree. So we had to take off the mules and cut the tree close to the ground so that the wagon could go over it.

The first day out from Cheyenne we had no trouble, but the second day was warmer and the ice was thawing. The creeks began to run, and at Big Cottonwood Creek the water was so high that we camped for the night without trying to cross it. I did not want to put the mules through the cold water and then turn them out for the night. It thawed more during the night and the water and ice were running harder by morning. This stream comes out of the Bad Lands and I knew it would be running high for several days, as the Bad Lands had been covered by a heavy snow. Rather than camp there and wait for the water to go down, I decided to bridge it, as I had seen the soldiers do for the Custer expedition in 1874.

We cut three big trees about forty feet long and dragged them across till one end rested on each bank. Next we laid twelve-foot poles as close together as we could across the trees and covered them with willows which were then covered with grass that we cut in the ravines, making a foundation for the dirt which we dumped on top. It took us two days to build the bridge and get our wagons across, but the same bridge was used for several years.

But our troubles had only begun when we had crossed the Big Cottonwood. By that time the ground had thawed so much that our heavy loads cut into the wet gumbo soil to the hubs of the wheels. The teams could not pull their wagons through it, so we had to uncouple the trail wagons, and even then the wheels cut in so deep we had to take off the brake beams, for they dragged along the ground. We

would take the lead wagons six or seven miles in the forenoon, then get back to camp by one or two o'clock. The cook had stayed in camp, so we would get our dinner, feed our mules, hitch up again, and take the trail wagons up to the others.

We were pulling the life out of our mules, as they had to travel eighteen or twenty miles to move the outfit six or seven. But we had to keep this up for eight days. In fact, we had been out from Cheyenne River twelve days and had gone only ninety miles. The men and teams were nearly worn out climbing around in the mud and we had had to shoot one mule after he broke his leg. But our real trouble was the shortage in provisions, as we had now been on the road longer than it should have taken us to make the entire trip and we were less than halfway.

We were camped about three miles north of the Big White River near the present town of Murdo. In the night, the herder brought all the stock to camp and roused the men. Away to the north and spreading east and west as far as we could see, a terrible prairie fire was sweeping onto us. The snow had all been gone for several days and the grass was dry, but the heat from such a fire would have dried the grass ahead as it burned.

As soon as we could get the mules and horses tied up to the wagons, we ran a few hundred feet north of the camp and started a fire which we beat back along the west side to keep it from going into our camp. When it had burned past on the east side of the wagons, a few men stayed to watch it from burning back, but the most of us ran north

again and started another fire at the same place we had lighted the first one, taking this past the camp on the west side. Before we had the camp protected, herds of deer and antelope fled past us, running ahead of the flames. Coyotes and wolves and jackrabbits raced by, increasing in numbers as the blazing line advanced in its wave of destruction.

The darkness had given place to a fiery glow in which all shadows were twisted and exaggerated. The men and wagons looked weird and monstrous; the racing animals were like strange creatures from a lost world. Birds flew over and around us, first like darting shadows in their fright, then, as the fire came on, like great bats driven from an immense grate. As the blaze raced toward us, the air was filled with a roaring and crackling and clouds of smoke enveloped us, smarting our eyes and noses and throats. Showers of sparks fell on the grass within the circle we had burned and had to be watched and whipped out.

The bedding and wagons had to be guarded and the men moved about among their teams, stroking and talking to them to quiet their fright. We had done all we could to save ourselves and the camp, but there were minutes of anxiety and the heat was intense as the wall of flame swept up and then around us, leaving miles of blackened prairie on all sides. Away to the east, we could see it burning for hours after our camp had been passed.

We were now faced with another difficulty, for the grass was gone which should have fed our mules and our

grain was nearly out. I knew there was no chance of getting through to the Missouri with what food and grain we had, so the next morning I had the men unload three of the trail wagons. It did not take very long to take off twenty to twenty-five thousand pounds of metal, for the Sitting Bull bullion went about seventy per cent silver and thirty per cent lead. The bullion was in bricks about twelve inches long, five inches wide, and four inches thick, weighing around one hundred twenty-five pounds each.

I did not want to leave the outfit, so I sent Charley Johnson and two other men besides the night herder on to Chamberlain after provisions. They had eighteen mules, six to a wagon, and reached the Missouri, more than eighty miles, in three days, but by the time they arrived the ice had broken up and was running so they could not get across and the men had to lay in camp eight or ten days before the ferryboat could go after them. Then they got food, grain, and baled hay and started back.

We in camp were anxiously awaiting their return. The fire had driven the game into bends of the White River and we had killed some, but most of the deer and antelope had crossed the river to find feed within a day or two after the fire. The mules could find a little grass in deep ravines which the fire had passed over and in bends of the river and got along fairly well. But the grub had lasted only ten days after the men had left us and after that we lived on very light rations.

The corn had been carried in sacks on top of the bullion and some sacks would wear out or tear and some of the

corn be spilled all the time. This we carefully scraped up from each wagon, moving all the bullion to get it, but the entire lot was but little over a peck. The boys hauled wood from the river and with the ashes I made lye and soaked off the outside hull of the corn, as I had seen my mother and grandmother do, when I was a boy. Then we boiled this hominy, using old scraps of meat and scrapings from the lard cans to flavor and season it, but it made scant portions among ten men for seven days.

East of us a couple of hundred feet was a rather high point, and the boys wore a path to this hill from the camp, as a dog wears a path to a bone he has buried. From this butte, they could see twenty miles or so, and they spent the days in watching for the wagons to come into sight. We dared not leave our wagons, for the Indians would have come and burned them.

The last straw on our already heavy burden was the scarcity of tobacco and we all ran out of that several days before Johnson and his men returned. We minded the end of the supply of tobacco more than we did the end of the grub. We spent hours talking of what might have happened to the men to delay them and what we would do if they did not return. We all knew just what we would do when they did come, but we were beginning to fear the Indians had taken them.

On the fifteenth day, some of the boys on the hill reported they could see teams coming, but still seven or eight miles east. Two of them took saddle horses and went to meet the wagons, getting grub and tobacco and

riding back ahead of them. That night we sat up all night cooking and eating and telling each other the experiences that had befallen each outfit. The next day we got loaded up again and our trail wagons coupled on, ready to move out.

We had been camped there sixteen days, making it thirty-one since we had left the Hills and we were still eighty miles from Chamberlain. But the prairie was now dry and we got to the Missouri in three days, then took two days longer to get the wagons across on the ferry. We unloaded the bullion onto freight cars, but enough freight had not been shipped in to reload and we had to wait several days more before we could return.

I had wired to Bramble and Miner in the Hills that I still thought it best to return by way of Pierre, but they wired to their shipping clerk at Chamberlain to instruct me to return the way I had gone. Hay and grain were cheap at Chamberlain, so the mules were getting a good rest and good feeding and were looking fine.

Two bull outfits had spent the winter in Chamberlain, and with my outfit the town was full of men. The weather was warm and pleasant, so they spent a lot of their time playing ball. A number of fairly good players developed, and after several games among ourselves a match was arranged with the Chamberlain boys. Our team was drafted from the bullwhackers and mule skinners with some additions from a stock company which was playing in the local theater. I pitched, as I had done on the school nine,

Cliff Sibley, one of my men, caught, and the showmen filled two bases and played at shortstop. We bet the town boys fifty dollars on the game, but only played five innings, when the local team admitted they had no show of beating us and paid over the money.

That night the boys celebrated their victory by spending the money they had won. Most of them got full, but they were happy and ready for any kind of fun. A man named Beal was running a saloon, but he knew nothing about handling a crowd of Western trailsmen, and when they began to get a little loud and rough he said something which made them mad, so they just took charge of the bar and treated every one who came in. That soon became tiresome and they concluded to go to some other place. I slipped out ahead and posted the proprietor of this place on how he should treat them. So when they arrived, he said: "Boys, help yourselves. Drink all you want but don't break things up."

Bill Quinn and Clark were the owners of the other outfits, and they, like myself, took no part in the fun but went along to keep the boys from going too far and getting into serious trouble. After the second saloon, Clark said he was going back to camp and to bed but Quinn stayed with me to trail the men.

When the men had made the rounds of the saloons, they decided to go up the creek to a sporting house. In a very few minutes they had made a wreck of the place, breaking up the furniture and driving out the inmates. Quinn and I persuaded them not to destroy the piano, for

we did not want the boys to do any serious harm, though we were enjoying the fun as much as any one.

The boys went back to town when nothing was left for them to break up but the piano, and, hearing music at the hotel, it now took their fancy to attend the dance which was being held in the dining room of the Wright House. We told them it was an invitation affair and they could not go in, but they insisted, and after so much devilment were in the mood for doing anything that caught their attention. I knew Mr. Wright, who had owned a hotel in Sioux Falls where I had often been a guest, so I talked to him and suggested it would be better to invite them in than to have them rush the party as they had been doing. So he came out and asked them in to the dance, but told them he expected them to be gentlemen in his hotel.

The boys went inside, took off their hats, and stood along the wall, watching a dance or two, then went out quietly and back to camp. As they had come out, Mr. Wright stood at the door with a box of cigars, and this won them completely, so they sang his praises till they stretched out in their blankets. I have often wondered what the dancers thought about their unexpected visitors, for the boys had made enough noise, earlier in the evening, to be heard all over town, and no doubt the guests at the dance were surprised to have the visit end so quietly.

Quinn, Clark, and I went around to the various places the next day and settled for the damage the boys had done. The saloon keepers charged them twenty-five dollars at each place, which was reasonable enough, but the

landlady at the sporting house wanted two hundred. We told her we would give her fifty and she ought to be glad to get that as she was conducting an unlawful business and we need not pay her anything, but she could take the fifty dollars or nothing. Of course she took the fifty dollars, but she decided that was a good time to leave Chamberlain, as she had been in trouble with the police before.

The men were still praising Wright the next day and saying what a gentleman he was, so to show their appreciation, they wanted to eat at his hotel and instructed Clark, Quinn, and me to order a meal for them. About thirty of us ate at the hotel that night, and Wright had taken the trouble to see that we had an extra good dinner.

But the best joke of the whole affair came when the local newspaper came out with the account of the wild evening, and the lady editor told how the boys had cleaned up the town and driven out undesirable characters and praised them for their work as reformers. That gave the boys enough fun to pay for all the wild party had cost them.

A few days later, we got loaded up and across the river. The boat had to land about four miles above the town and the cook wagon had gone over to the west side. While waiting for us to get all the wagons across, the cook had time to prepare some beans and other things that he could not cook while we were on the trail. He had some beans left, and the next day, after we had finished our dinner, three Indians rode into camp. I told the cook to give them

something to eat and he said he had nothing left but bread, butter, and coffee.

That would have been enough, but I noticed the pot of beans sitting beside the stove and gave them to the Indians, who made short work of the treat. They hung around the camp watching us, but in less than a half hour they were all three running over the prairie like wild men, holding their arms across their stomachs and groaning. We tried to find out what was the matter, and they would point to the bean pot and say, "*Seecha, seecha,*" which means "Bad, bad."

So I scraped off some of the beans which they had left on the sides of the pot and found they had soured. I did not want the Indians mad at us for giving them the beans, so I ate what I could scrape out to prove to them the beans were all right and that something else had made them sick. They suffered so much we were all sorry for them, and I was sorry I had no medicine to give them, but I do not suppose they could have been persuaded to take anything if I had had it.

After all the hard luck we had had going down, we should have had a good trip back, but our bad luck still followed us. We had not gone more than twenty-five miles from the river when a big rain came one night and we had to lay over the following day in camp. From there we could take the new trail back to Deadwood or follow an old Indian trail to Fort Pierre. We had not pulled five hundred feet on the new trail when I could see we would never make the trip back the way we had gone, and I told

the boys to pull back onto the Indian trail, for we would go to Fort Pierre on the west side of the river. This was an old traveled road and we had no further trouble till we came to Medicine Creek, about thirty miles from the river.

To get down to the creek crossing, we had to take the wagons down a very steep hill, so steep we had to put chains on the wheels of both lead and trail wagons. In Cliff Sibley's team, we had a saddle mule which was what the freighters called a "sitter." When going downhill, if the wagons crowded forward onto her, she would sit back in the harness and this would swing the wagon to one side and often cause it to upset.

We had rough locks on both wagons and Cliff said he was afraid to ride her down the hill, for if he used the spur on her she would give a jump forward and then sit back again and was pretty sure to upset the loads. I jumped off my horse and told Cliff to lead him and I would ride the mule down. We had just got started down the hill when the chain on the trail wagon broke and the loads came ahead onto the team. The mule I was riding sat back and broke the hame strap so that she fell backward and onto her side, with me on her and my leg caught under her.

Luckily for me Sibley was right there, and he pulled me from under the mule, dragging off my boot. The trail wagon came down against the lead wagon with such force that it knocked the front wagon around and turned it over, killing the mule I had been riding, as she lay on her side

after her fall. Except for Cliff's pulling me off I, too, would have been under the loaded wagon. That made two mules we had killed on the trip, but we always had eight or ten running loose to use in just such cases, so we caught up another one and moved on.

We had no more serious trouble or accidents, and after getting onto the Deadwood—Fort Pierre Trail near the latter place, we covered the last leg of the trip in ten days, which was good time for that season of the year with the heavy loads we had.

We had been gone nearly three months and the boys each had about one hundred forty dollars coming to them, from which I took each man's share of the expense of their spree in Chamberlain, about five dollars. Bramble and Miner paid them in nearly all gold coin, and while I was paying off the last of the men, some of those who had been paid at first were matching twenty-dollar gold pieces, heads and tails.

Under ordinary circumstances, if we had made the trip to Chamberlain by way of Pierre, Bramble and Miner should have cleared about five thousand dollars, but as we had been instructed to go over the new road, in spite of my protests, no one but the owners was to blame and they had to pay for the experience by a loss of nearly two thousand dollars.

At Fort Pierre, a man came to see me about going to work for the outfit.

"Have you ever skinned mules?" I asked him.

"No," he replied, "but I think I could all right. How long have they been dead?"

I decided at once that he was too new in that country for a freight outfit.

CHAPTER XX

THE INDIAN

Any picture of life on the frontier between 1867 and 1885 would be incomplete without presenting the Indian and the part he played in events during that time as well as the changes which occurred in his habits and mode of living.

I can hardly begin with my first acquaintance with Indians, for the Senecas had formerly roamed over western Pennsylvania where I was raised and a few of them still were found there during my boyhood, though the tribe had been given lands west of the Mississippi years before my birth. But the Senecas who remained had taken up the ways of the white man and lived by hunting, fishing, selling trinkets of their own make, or medicines of their own concoction. Some of them farmed, but many lived by lumbering, for which work they were well suited and became expert while that industry was at its height in the region.

These Indians had used the oil from the oil springs in the Alleghenies for liniment and other medicinal purposes and it had been called Seneca Oil after them. During my boyhood, this region became the scene of the first oil boom, and the first oil millionaires were created when the idea of getting the oil by drilling wells had proven successful.

But these Senecas that I knew in Pennsylvania were far

different from the Indians I encountered on the plains. On my trip down the Ohio and up the Missouri, I saw Indians at St. Louis and Kansas City—the descendants of the Eastern tribes that had been moved west of the Mississippi in the early '20's, but later, as the line of immigration advanced, to reservations still farther to the west, where it was thought the land was good only for hunting and would never be encroached upon by the farmer, thus solving the Indian problem.

But the early frontier policy proved unsuccessful, because it depended on keeping the white man out of the Indian territory as well as keeping the Indians in it, and the development of the trade with Santa Fe and other Mexican settlements as well as the fur trade in the Northwest had made it impossible to keep the white men out of the region west of the Missouri. The immigration of Americans to Oregon and of the Mormons to Great Salt Lake had turned the attention of the American people to the Indian country as well as to what lay beyond it, and the Great American Desert, which the government, in 1820, had thought would never be wanted by its citizens and would forever be the domain of the Indians, by 1850 was marked with the well-defined trails of the trapper and explorer and by at least two much traveled routes.

Through acquaintance, the Great American Desert had lost much of its terror and a strip along the eastern side of the Indian country, between the "desert" and the western line of civilization, had been found rich and fertile and therefore desirable by the farmer, so the Indian tribes

had been pushed still farther to the west in some cases and, in others, they had been moved to lands farther south and the territory previously given to other tribes had been divided to make room for the northern Indians.

In addition to the trapper, the trader, and the immigrant, the soldier was an important factor in the Indian country, for the government had found it necessary to establish and maintain forts at various places along the main trails for the protection of the wagon trains.

The war with Mexico and the discovery of gold in California were followed by new invasions of the Indian country and the caravans of the Oregon pioneers were far outnumbered by the results of this new influence on movement westward. Within a few years, gold and silver were found in many places in the Rocky Mountains, and each new discovery meant more travel across the plains along the old trails as well as new ones which shortened the routes to the "diggin's."

Each new "find" meant more Indian troubles, for the Indian realized that with the country beyond him given up to settlement, he had no place to retreat from the persistent attacks of the farmer. Each new trail meant greater difficulty for the plains Indian to live in the only way he knew—by hunting, as the caravans not only killed quantities of game which they did not use and shot for sport, but they drove the game farther away from the Indian camps and made it harder for them to get a living.

The Indians fought against the visible cause of their troubles and annoyed the caravans and settlers, then the

soldiers followed to punish the Indians, and after being severely chastised, the offending tribe were induced to make a treaty by which more of their land was reluctantly given up or they were moved to new territory.

So by 1865 we find the plains Indian with his back against the mountains and the flood of immigration threatening him in front. The Civil War had turned public attention away from the West, but had emphasized the need of better connections with that distant coast and was followed by the great era of transcontinental railroad building.

This was the final blow to the independent existence of the plains Indians. They had fought a losing battle against each succeeding invasion of their lands, but the trader, the immigrant, the miner, the overland mail, the Pony Express, and the freighter's train had all prevailed and the Indians' warlike protest had only resulted in loss of their territory and reduced privileges. But with the minds of children, the Indians did not profit by their past experiences in the path of progress and took up their fight against the iron horse and his steel track with increased activity, for even the Indians could see that they were making a last stand and that settlement would quickly follow such an easy means of travel and that the game would be driven still farther from their reach and the land demanded for the farmer.

So at the time I arrived on the Kansas plains in 1867, the Indians were making more trouble than they had for years and were engaged in the Cheyenne War—a last des-

perate attempt to protest against the Kansas Pacific Railroad. But in October of that year the Peace Commission met the tribes at Medicine Lodge in Kansas, and by the treaty made there, the Kiowas, Comanches, Apaches, southern Cheyennes, and Arapahoes ceded all their rights to occupy the great claims which had once been granted to them in the Southwest and agreed to confine themselves to a new reserve in Indian Territory.

Perhaps at that time I was too young or too new in the West to be interested in the Indian problem or even to realize that one existed. We hunters found them annoying and generally held the opinion, common on the frontier, that "the only good Indian was a dead one." But during the next few years, I traveled many hundreds of miles in parties of two and three, through country inhabited only by Indians and we were not molested, although far removed from the protection of soldiers. As I became acquainted with the frontier conditions and the Indian's future, my views changed and my sympathies have since been with these unfortunate people.

The greater part of my experience has been with the Sioux and at the beginning of my acquaintance with them, in 1870, these tribes were occupying the Great Sioux Reservation, which was roughly included by that part of the present state of South Dakota lying west of the Missouri River. They had played their part in defending the prairies from settlement and had met with the same result as the tribes farther south. They had, however, not encountered the white invasion at so early a date, for the lands

they occupied were not considered of agricultural value except where they faced the Mississippi.

The Sioux along the upper Mississippi had been the first of these bands to feel the pressure of the westward-moving frontier and had ceded most of their lands in Minnesota, accepting a much reduced reserve; but unfortunately the United States had been slow about meeting the terms of the treaty. The nation was engaged in a great war and little attention was paid to half-civilized Indian bands on the frontier.

In 1862, the Minnesota Sioux had protested against this neglect and the unlawful claims of the traders by the most serious Indian trouble the frontier had yet seen, though there was no more cause for trouble at that time than there had been for years. An accidental row was like setting a match to powder, and more than seven hundred whites were known to have been massacred. The punishment of the Sioux was heavy, and after several sharp engagements with the soldiers, the Indians received further punishment in the courts and three hundred were condemned to death. With the usual injustice which characterized the Indian relations, most of these were farmer Sioux who had been drawn reluctantly into the conflict. A wave of protest swept the country, and President Lincoln yielded in spite of the indignation of the frontier. Yet thirty-eight were hanged on one scaffold, and the tribe were punished by being removed from their farms and fertile land to less desirable country west of the Missouri.

The northern Sioux had been so far beyond the advancing frontier that they had had no treaty relations with the United States till 1851, when with other tribes they had met at Fort Laramie and granted the whites the right to cross their lands which then extended as far south as the Platte. Their people, perhaps numbering sixteen thousand then, lived by hunting, but as the game decreased they became more dependent on the annuities and with few exceptions kept at peace.

The plains war of 1864, although for the most part engaged in by tribes south of the Platte, had made the northern Sioux uneasy and in 1865 a commission had attempted to treat with them at Fort Sully; but the results were unsatisfactory. Many of the tribes did not come at all, chiefs were sullen and complaining, and little was accomplished except to repeat the terms of the Fort Laramie treaty by which roads were permitted to be opened through the Indian country and the Indians agreed to keep away from the trails.

The mines of Idaho and Montana had attracted attention since the early '60's and were still the objective of heavy traffic, but were away from the main trails. The government undertook in 1865 to bring them into more direct contact with the older settlements by building a road from Fort Laramie. This led through a charming foothill country just east of the Big Horn Mountains and a veritable Indian paradise. There was wood, game, water, and grass and it was a favorite hunting ground of the Sioux. The new Powder River road would run through

this region, and here came the test of the Sioux treaties, for it had been shown that game vanished before immigration.

After three years of warring in which the Indians suffered little loss, but constantly annoyed the soldier at work on the road, destroying their wood trains almost within sight of newly built forts and at one time wiping out a relief party of eighty-one men and officers, the United States assented to the terms laid down by Red Cloud. The commissioners had convinced themselves that the occupation of the Powder River country was illegal and unjust, so the garrisons were withdrawn from the recently built forts and the road was closed—the one instance where the United States has been at war and has made peace on the terms of the enemy.

But the Sioux lost territory even though Red Cloud had saved the Powder River country for the Indians. While it was agreed that the country east of the Big Horn was unceded Indian domain, the tribes bound themselves to occupy as their permanent home the Great Sioux Reservation in the southwestern part of Dakota Territory, and they had begun to feel the actual compression which earlier had removed the tribes of the Southwest.

In the beginning, the government policy toward the Indians had been one of peace and the United States had recognized its responsibility toward them when the Bureau of Indian Affairs was established in 1832. But during the years when immigration and development had been most persistent across the Indian lands, the tribes had caused

the greatest disturbance and the War Department had been called on so frequently to protect the trails and railroad camps that it seemed as though a policy of war had been adopted instead.

But the relations between the government and the Indians had been in civilian hands as long as conditions made it possible, and as each tribe was removed from the greater territory and placed on a smaller reserve, agents had been appointed who were generally more effective than army officers would have been, and although these agents were frequently incompetent, their ideals were still those of peace and industry.

Since the first tribes had accepted lands west of the Mississippi, the government had tried to introduce tradesmen and teachers among them to teach them how to live as farmers. But wild game was still too plentiful for the Indians to adapt themselves to such occupations as a means of livelihood and it was not till after the treaties at Medicine Lodge in 1867 and at Fort Laramie the following year that any noticeable progress was made in the effort to lead them to civilization by making them depend on their own efforts for a living. By these treaties, the southern tribes were settled in Indian Territory and the northern Indians who had roamed the plains were confined to the Great Sioux Reservation, so on their limited domains it became easier to put agents in charge of them who could keep in touch with their wards.

Unfortunately, these agents were not always chosen with the welfare of the Indian as the main purpose in their

selection. Like most government positions filled by appointment, these were used to pay off political debts, and much of the disturbance which occurred in later years has been due to the dishonesty on the part of the agents or to their inability to understand the Indians and to deal with them successfully.

I have told in an earlier chapter about Captain Burleigh and his various schemes for increasing the income of the agent while he held that position at the Yankton Agency, but I am glad to say that the case of Burleigh was an extreme one and that not all the agents were dishonest. Many of them had the interests of the Indians at heart, but they had little or no experience in the West or among the Indians before taking up their work at the agency.

Another cause of trouble with the tribes after they had accepted reservations was the inability of the Indians to understand their debts to the agency stores and traders. They were allowed to buy goods and have them charged to them to be paid out of the next annuity. With their immature minds, the Indians could not realize that their debts would take nearly all the money which was coming to them, and consequently they were disappointed with the amounts they received and were ready to blame the agent and the government for their troubles. This sort of dealing with a people who could not understand such transactions should never have been permitted, for it must be admitted that the traders' accounts often showed the Indians were charged more for goods than white men paid for the same things.

One historian says, in this connection, "It would be an interesting study to investigate the connection between the traders' bills and the agitation for new cessions, since the latter usually meant satisfaction of the former."

The Peace Commission of 1867 had done good work, and in April, 1869, Congress voted two millions to be used in maintaining peace on the plains; "to promote civilization among said Indians . . . and encourage their efforts at self-support." The President was authorized to appoint a board of not more than ten men, "eminent for their intelligence and philanthropy," who would serve without any salary with the Secretary of the Interior in exercising joint control over this money.

This board made mistakes, no doubt, but after it was created there was a distinct improvement in the management of the reservation tribes, although, as later events proved, corruption was by no means stopped. The Commission and President Grant tried to raise the standard of agency control through the several missionary and charitable organizations which had been at work among the reservation tribes for a number of years. These groups were asked to nominate agents, teachers, doctors, and other employees who were to be appointed by the Indian Bureau.

Many denominations of the Christian church had been at work among the Indians for years, and to my mind these have been the greatest influences toward improvement in the condition of these people. Besides the religious training and influence which the missionaries

brought to the reservations, they established the first schools and pointed the way for the course which the government later adopted toward civilizing the Indians through education.

One of the first missionaries to visit the Indians along the Missouri was Father de Smet, a Belgian priest of the Jesuit order, who had been one of a party of priests to establish a school near St. Louis, in 1823. Here young men were trained for the priesthood and Indian boys were taught in a boarding school. The tribes were still too unsettled for the children to be kept long in school and this project was abandoned. But a few years later, the Flatheads who had heard of the "black gowns" and something of their teachings from the French trappers, sent a request to St. Louis that a priest might go to them. This request could not be met at the time nor for several years later, although the Indians sent other delegations to St. Louis to plead their cause.

At that time Father de Smet was a teacher in the college which had been founded in St. Louis and he begged to go to these Indians. When the matter of his support was given as an obstacle, he replied that he would get that from friends in Europe, and during the years of his service he raised more than two hundred thousand dollars besides valuable gifts of ornaments and objects for the altar. As early as 1836 he had worked among the Pottawatomies near the present Council Bluffs, but after 1840 the conversion of the red men became his life work. He traveled nearly three hundred thousand miles on foot,

horseback, by flatboat, and Indian canoe made from buffalo hide, visiting and teaching the Indians along the Missouri, in the Rocky Mountains, and even to the Pacific coast.

Other missionaries worked along different lines and lived among the Indians from the first, teaching them to work and farm and showing the women how to make homes, as well as teaching the Bible. Schools were begun as soon as Indians took land individually, and it was shown that any real improvement in the condition of the Indians must begin with the children.

Outstanding among such workers were the Riggs and Williamson families, who established schools and missions among the Minnesota Sioux, later extending their efforts into the Dakotas, where the younger generations have continued the work of their parents and become an active influence in all the later troubles between the whites and the Indians, as well as building up schools at which many of the most advanced Sioux have received their early education.

Some of the dangers, even to the missionaries, in frontier life are given by Rev. T. L. Riggs. "I was born at Lac Qui Parle, Minnesota, June 3, 1847, and lived there till I was seven years old. Just before my seventh birthday, my younger brother and I burned down our house. We had been sent down cellar for vegetables, and as the cellar was by no means frost proof, hay had been stuffed in under the floor. The long stems of the hay made delightful torches as we lit them from our candle and then

whipped them out. After a bit, we were unable to put out a torch we had lit and the house was burned down with about everything we had in it. My father then moved about thirty miles down on the Minnesota River to what we called the upper Sioux Agency and that was our home until 1862, when the Sioux outbreak took place.

"With the assistance of some friendly Indians, we were guided across the Minnesota River at the falls just a little below the present town of Granite Falls and from there we roamed northward and around through the swamps and tall grass, trying to get into Fort Ridgley as a place of refuge. When we came within three or four miles of Fort Ridgley, one of our number was sent on ahead to learn conditions at the fort. Just at dusk he came back, saying that the commandant at Fort Ridgley advised us not to try to get into the post. He had five hundred women and children there. The post had been fighting Indians since Monday morning and it was then Friday night. He expected they would all be wiped out the next morning.

"My father and Dr. Williamson held council as to whether they were able to pick out the old crossing of the creek on the road which came from Traverse de Sioux, the creek entering the Minnesota River just below the fort. Dr. Williamson frankly said he did not believe he was able to do it. My father said he was not sure, but he thought he could and we left the road leading into Fort Ridgley, turning at right angles down into the brush and miraculously, as it seemed to me, at least, we struck the creek exactly at the crossing. We went on some distance

in the valley of the creek and then we were all tired to the extreme limit, so dropped in the grass and went to sleep.

"In the party was a young scientific student from Yale who stood guard and sat all night on a little mound or perhaps a pile of our goods and with the sharp-butt corners of his little .22 rifle pounded his feet. In the morning we had to cut his boots off, for his feet had swollen so badly they could not be removed otherwise. From there we struck out toward Henderson, and as we went, all along to the southward and westward there were fires which showed burning homes between us and the Minnesota River, especially in the direction of New Ulm. Our shoes had already worn out before this time. The uppers on my father's shoes were all gone and the rest of us were in about the same plight.

"We reached Henderson the second day after leaving the vicinity of Fort Ridgley and there we were furnished with shoe wear all round. Our party numbered something over thirty, and we felt when we had reached Henderson that we had gone through the worst of it, but we found the people down that way were just about as thoroughly scared as the settlers in the country from which we had fled."

After attending school at St. Anthony, now East Minneapolis, and Beloit College, Dr. Riggs worked among the negroes in Mississippi, then finished his education at the seminary in Chicago before taking up his missionary work among the Sioux in Dakota, in 1873. In his own

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words, "Since that time I have not been much of a roamer. My work was among the Dakota or Sioux Indians, but I cannot say that they always welcomed me very heartily. One of the remembrances I have of those early days is a visit from a hostile Indian who came from the Black Hills region. He came to me and asked me what I had come for. I explained as well as I could.

" 'Why don't you come out here and learn something before you try to teach us?' he asked.

"It was rather pertinent, and he went on with the suggestion that I go with him to the Black Hills and learn about the Indians. I accepted his invitation without any apparent quavers and then his face settled down into a grim, cast-iron expression and he said, 'If you don't learn, I'll kill you and take your scalp.'

"I did not appreciate that so much at the time as I did in the years that followed, but I never saw him again. He never came back for me. Probably, he was killed in some tribal quarrel or he may have lost his life in the Custer fight in 1875."

In later years, Rev. Mr. Riggs established a large Indian school at Oahe, a few miles above Pierre on the Missouri River. A much older school was located at Santee, on the Nebraska side of the river about thirty miles west of Yankton. At this mission school, Rev. Alfred L. Riggs had been located since 1870, and here many of the leading members of the Sioux tribes received their education after they had shown a desire for more learning than was provided in the day schools.

A notable and interesting example of what the Indian can become is Dr. Charles Eastman, who roamed the plains and lived a savage life till he was fifteen. After the outbreak in Minnesota, his father was not heard of for years and Eastman lived with an uncle in Canada where the tribe had fled. A few years later, the father located the tribe and went to get his son, bringing him back to a farm near Flandreau where he was sent to day school. Soon afterward he went to the Santee Normal, making the greater part of his way on foot, and here the boys of many tribes and of many hereditary hatreds were thrown together and taught to be citizens and Christians.

Eastman showed unusual ability and desire for education, and through the efforts of Rev. A. L. Riggs, attended college at Beloit, later going to Knox and Dartmouth, where he was conspicuous as the only Indian in a school that was founded for the education of the Indian. Eighteen years after the boy was taken from his savage life, he was a graduate doctor of medicine and was stationed at the Pine Ridge Agency as the resident physician, for with grateful heart he wanted to work among his own people and help them as he had been helped.

A great part of Eastman's education had been at mission and denominational schools where his expenses had been met by friends of the Indians and by his own work. An active policy by the government toward education had not then been adopted, although due credit was given to the organizations which carried on this work among the tribes.

The brighter day which seemed to be dawning for the

Sioux after the treaty of 1868 was soon dispelled, for the Black Hills held too much promise of gold to be left in the peaceful possession of the Indians. As early as 1870, exploring parties were organized to go out from Cheyenne, but were restrained by the soldiers. Then four years later, the exploration of the Hills region was carried out as an official expedition under the command of General Custer and caused much agitation among the Sioux. The Indian Commissioner thought the red men were unduly alarmed and that little would result from this exploration, for little gold was found. But the great trouble was the violation of the treaty, which was already in dispute among the several bands, for many of them claimed it had been made without their consent and was not binding on them. Some tribes had not been called into the council and some chiefs had refused to agree to the terms, so it was only natural that dissension would follow. The government made the mistake of assuming that the chiefs had any actual authority over the bands they led and that the consent of a chief bound the band to recognize the treaty.

The same year as the Custer invasion of the Hills, another affair served to cause further discontent among the Indians. Professor O. C. Marsh of Yale was conducting a party into the Black Hills for scientific study when he was stopped by Red Cloud and not permitted to continue his journey till he had agreed to report to Washington the condition at the agency and to take samples of the decayed flour and poor quality of rations which were being issued by the agent to the Ogallalas. Professor Marsh became

interested in the situation which was reported to him and took time to find out the truth. He concluded that plots existed to defraud the government and that dishonesty and mismanagement reached even to the Secretary of the Interior. In spite of the opposition which he met, he managed to stir up so much sympathy and interest in the East that a commission was appointed to investigate the affair. The commission "whitewashed" many officials whom Marsh had accused, but revealed many conditions in the Indian Bureau which justified the uneasiness which was growing among the various tribes of the Sioux.

While the Custer party had found but little gold, they did find some in many places and this led the restless miners and settlers to prospect for themselves. By 1875, fully a thousand miners were scattered through the Hills, causing disturbances in the Indian mind and exaggerating the value of the region. The Indians, especially the younger braves, already dissatisfied over the treaty, and still more so by the action of the government in violating it, began leaving the agencies and joining the hostile bands which roamed at will outside the reservation. As yet the Indians had observed the terms of the treaty, for they had been granted the right to hunt outside the limits of their reserve, but when they were ordered to return to the agencies and were unable to do so within the limited time which was given them, the Sioux were turned over to the War Department. The campaign which followed ended with the battle of the Little Big Horn, in which Custer's command was destroyed, and I am glad to find that, during late

years, accounts of this conflict give the Indians credit for having gained the victory by their ability and skill in fighting and not by a massacre of ambushed men as the earlier reports had it.

The conflict on the Greasy Grass—the Dakota name for the Big Horn—broke the resistance of the Sioux nation, but the story of that battle was told for many moons by the warriors who had had a part in it and fed the fading hope of the tribes, which, scattered and starving, sought to avoid the inevitable surrender. It kept alive the influence of Sitting Bull for months after other chiefs had returned to the agencies, and around the camp fires that great day was talked about for years, when these people had nothing left of the old, free life except their memories.

Following the battle on the Little Big Horn, the Sioux under their several leaders scattered, but were chased over the prairies by the soldiers till starvation forced most of them to surrender. Sitting Bull with a few other chiefs escaped into Canada and made trouble there for several years. Finally, in 1881, he, too, came in—the last of the hostiles to surrender, but he then had only a remnant of the bands which had followed him in 1876, for Gall, Crow King, and other chiefs had deserted him several years earlier, returning to their agencies.

I admit that my sympathies have always been with the Indians in the matter of the Black Hills cession. I have talked with Spotted Tail and Red Cloud, American Horse, Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse. I have heard them tell of

the great strength and valor of the Sioux before their lands were taken and their game driven off, of the treaties they had made and kept, for they had no wish to fight the soldiers; and how the white man had broken these treaties and taken their lands, promising to pay for them with money and goods from which they were cheated by dishonest agents. When they were cheated out of their food and had to go back to the hunt, the soldiers were sent to bring them back, killing their women and children.

The white race and the United States Government have a long record of injustice and wrong to the Indians to their discredit, and I know of nothing more shameless than the way the Black Hills was secured through violation of a treaty and the abuses which followed the attempt of the Indians to defend their rights. Men familiar with the Sioux say the region could have been opened to settlement by the miners without the high price in flesh and blood of both white men and Indians. And surely there was no excuse for the treatment the Sioux received after they surrendered.

Even before they signed the treaty, the Indians at the Standing Rock and Cheyenne agencies were disarmed and dismounted. Their ponies were driven to Sioux City and Omaha, where they were sold for a small part of their value, which was little enough, but this act was considered necessary to prevent the Indians leaving the reservations should they again become dissatisfied. On my trip to the Hills in December, 1876, our outfit met two herds of these ponies before we reached Fort Pierre. There must

have been nearly three thousand of them, for besides taking the Indians' ponies, the soldiers had taken all the horses they found on the reservation—even those belonging to Frenchmen and half-breeds, who had built up ranches and had had no part in the fighting.

The ponies were poor and tired out from the months of travel they had endured while the Sioux were being starved into subjection, but the soldiers on good horses ran them from one military post to the next, where they were turned over to other soldiers on fresh horses and rushed on. After they had met us, we found dead horses every few rods, for when one played out or lagged, he was shot and the herd driven ahead.

One of the Frenchmen who lived near Fort Sully was justly aroused when his horses were driven off, and blamed the lieutenant who had commanded the party which took his ponies. But his protests had no effect, and he expressed his emotion to the amusement of the freighters: "Dat lootent, I feex he. I ketch he upon de Wak-a-bo-zhee [Okobojo Creek], up on de heel—I ketch he an I feex he."

Disarming and dismounting the Indians took from them all hope of further resistance and also the hope of existing by hunting, so they were entirely dependent upon the rations issued to them by the government. This condition would not have been so bad if the government had made good its promise according to the terms of the treaty and had given them the cows and oxen to which they were entitled. By the treaty, every man who settled

with his family on the reservation was to be furnished with a cow, a yoke of oxen, farming tools, and seed. A school and teacher were to be provided for every thirty children among the settled Indians and this was to continue for twenty years after the treaty was ratified. The government did not issue the cattle, seed, and implements to more than one-third of the families entitled to them, and nothing was done about the schools during the first ten years of the twenty following the treaty.

The Indians suffered many hardships during the winter of 1876-77, even after they had surrendered at the agencies, and with no guns they could not kill rabbits or such small animals as could be found near their camping places, and they had no ponies to go farther away. That winter I saw the squaws and children digging roots and gathering bark for food while the men hunted with their bows and arrows and trapped gophers, rabbits, and prairie dogs.

After the treaty of 1868, the rations for the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail bands had been freighted from Sidney on the Union Pacific, but the Standing Rock, Cheyenne, Brûlé, Crow Creek, and Yankton agencies had all been located on the Missouri River and their goods could be delivered by boats. By the terms of the new treaty, the Sioux on the southern agencies agreed to locate along the Missouri or at points accessible to it and the government prepared for their arrival by erecting warehouses from which they were to receive their rations.

Spotted Tail with his band had occupied the section in northern Nebraska east of Red Cloud's territory, and a

landing was selected for them about twenty miles south of the mouth of White River. The Red Cloud Landing was at the mouth of Medicine Creek, about forty miles below Fort Pierre.

The cold weather came early that year, 1877, and in October the boats loaded with goods for the Sioux froze in the river. The Spotted Tail band had reached Rosebud Creek and they remained there, themselves hauling most of their goods from the landing about one hundred miles and receiving pay from the government for this freighting. But the Red Cloud band was at the mouth of Little White River when the storm caught them and located there for the winter.

With my brother and two other men I had contracts that winter to deliver freight from the boats to the various agencies and camps. We hauled mostly flour and grain, and much of the supplies was for the military camps which were placed at each agency to keep the Indians under control, and to protect white travelers who were still rushing into the Hills. There was still much unrest and dissatisfaction among the Sioux, for they claimed that the treaty of 1876 had not been signed by three-fourths of the adult males as had been provided by the 1868 treaty for all future agreements. The Indians were restless for several years after ceding the Black Hills country, for they did not get the goods and food which they had been promised and they knew that they were being defrauded.

In the spring, Red Cloud returned to the southwestern part of the reservation and camped on White Clay Creek.

Here the government established an agency and built Red Cloud a house and here he lived with his Ogallala band until his death. Spotted Tail's band stayed in their camp of 1877 and the Rosebud Agency was located there.

The government had promised cattle, machinery, seed, and schools, but were slow about sending these things. Then instead of the mowers, rakes, plows, and harness which the Indians needed and could have used in their efforts to become farmers, they were given binders, fanning mills, and threshing machines, and it is easy to see whether the welfare of the Indians or the profit to the contractor was considered. The country in which they lived was not adapted to farming and the Indians knew nothing whatever about living in that way. Fully seventy-five per cent of the agents, traders, boss farmers, etc., were unfit for such positions and knew nothing about the character or habits of the people they were to teach, so the Indian had no confidence in them and they had no influence with their wards. A few notable exceptions show what could have been done if the agents and others who dealt with them had had the interests of the Indians at heart, for where such agents were in charge, little trouble followed and the Indians were sooner established on their own land, trying to earn a living.

The country west of the Missouri, part of which was in the reservation, is an ideal country for stock raising. The rich buffalo grass makes the best forage in the world, and the grama or alkali grass, which grows taller, makes fine hay. The land and the Indians were both better

adapted to stock raising than to farming, and even had they been able to raise grain there was no way to get it to market, for no railroad entered the reservation till 1905.

Had the Sioux been given cattle, a few head to each family, and then taught how to care for them, to make hay and raise corn, they would long ago have been independent of government support. In a few cases, the missionaries had built schools and churches and had drawn a few families to settle near by. These Indians soon took title to their lands and lived independently, farming and raising stock, sending their children to school and taking rapid steps along the road to civilization.

After giving up the Black Hills, the Sioux had to depend on their rations, for they had given up their last hunting ground. The buffalo had been driven north into Canada by the building of railroads across the prairies and no game existed on the reservation in any quantity to serve as a food supply. But in 1882, there occurred a very important event for the Indians, particularly those at the northern agencies. A great herd of buffalo, great at least for that late day, had drifted down and were feeding on the western side of the reservation, even to the Cheyenne River. The Indians at the Cheyenne and Standing Rock agencies went out in great hunting parties and killed thousands of them, but this was the last of the buffalo hunting, for what few escaped the Indians and the white hunters fled north again into the Bad Lands of the Little Missouri, where they furnished sport for a year or two, inviting Eastern game hunters into the region.

When on such hunts, the Indians were accompanied by the agent or some man who had influence among them to keep them from interfering with the whites. Rev. T. L. Riggs went out with one party of the Cheyennes and Agent McLaughlin at Standing Rock organized the party of about six hundred which killed five thousand animals. These hunts furnished the Indians with meat for a long time, besides hides for clothing and tepees and the sport which they enjoyed.

The Indians were not the only men to enjoy this last buffalo hunt and hundreds of hunters in Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming went after them. I was living then on the Cheyenne River and the party I went out with killed a number, seven of which were to my credit. Wagonloads of the meat were taken to Deadwood.

Only once since the fighting in 1876 have the Sioux given any trouble. The unrest which accompanied the belief in the coming of a Messiah to the Indians was general among all the Western tribes, but the teaching was accepted by only a few discontented leaders like Sitting Bull, who saw in it a means to regain the old power he had held. Such chiefs as American Horse, Red Cloud, Gall, and Crow King used their influence against this teaching and the ghost dancing which was a part of the ceremony. Had the situation been left in the hands of competent agents, it probably could have been handled without bloodshed till the craze had worn itself out. Unfortunately, a new and inexperienced agent called for protection from the army and the presence of the soldiers served to further alarm

the Indians, who then sought to save their lives in flight. They were overtaken by the troops and the massacre at Wounded Knee is no more credit to the United States than the one at Sand Creek in Colorado a few years before or Custer's attack on the Black Kettle village on the Washita.

Sitting Bull's death by the Indian police sent out to arrest him removed the danger of further disturbance among the Sioux. The years since then have seen this once powerful and warlike people come under the subjection of the white race. The change in their food and manner of living caused much sickness among them at first and their number decreased noticeably, but in late years, through the efforts of the government and mission teachers to introduce the principles of sanitation, proper clothing, and better homes along with education and religion, the last of the great tribes on the plains made the change from their nomadic life and their population is now increasing.

It is noticeable, however, that the free spirit and independence of the older generations are missing in the Sioux of to-day and no such men as Red Cloud, John Grass, or Gall are to be found among them. It is but the natural result of the life we have forced upon a once great race. The hunting grounds were taken away and the Indian was put on reservations, located generally in country for which the white man had no use. The buffalo which supplied the plains Indians with food and clothing, robes and tepees were killed off, and after the Indian had killed the few edible animals in his restricted territory, there was nothing

for him to do but to sit down near his agency and wait for the government to feed and make a citizen of him. Gradually the reservation was ceded and the land opened for white settlement till only a small part remains for the Indians' use.

In recent years, however, the land has been allotted to the Indians individually, and having white neighbors scattered among them, they have begun to profit by example, to raise stock and farm where their land is suitable and to produce a living while they are still receiving money from the government in payment for the lands they have ceded. The government maintains day schools scattered among the settlements where the boys are given manual training and the girls are taught home making in addition to the three R's which are about the limit of the average Indian.

Large boarding schools have been established at several places where higher grades are taught and graduates of colleges are not uncommon. Many Indian families are devout Christians and prefer the teaching of the mission schools to the government day schools, although the traveling expenses, clothing, and tuition must be provided by the family.

The Indian problem is rapidly being solved. A few of the tribes like the Osages and Quapaws have great wealth, which will be a temptation for exploit as long as it lasts. But most of the Indian land not required for themselves has been ceded and the money is being distributed to them. The old nomadic warriors have gone and the new genera-

tion has met the influence of education. Gradually, they are becoming self-supporting and history shows that the sooner their annuities cease, the sooner will they assume the obligations of citizenship and begin to progress.

CHAPTER XXI

LAST DAYS ON THE FRONTIER

After the misfortunes attending the trip to Chamberlain over the new road, Bramble and Miner did not consider that route with any favor. The future for freighting into the Hills did not look very bright to men who had as much invested in large outfits as they had, for there was little chance of keeping such big outfits employed with what freight came up the Missouri on the boats.

Another thing which was discouraging to the freighters was the new railroad branch which the North Western was building west from Sioux City, for this would get all the freight as soon as it was completed. There was, however, something to offset the end of the freighting into the Black Hills, for new gold and silver strikes were being made in Idaho and a new rush into that section was taking men from the older mining camps and from the whole country, as the Hills had done a few years earlier. The new field was north and west of Blackfoot, the nearest railroad town, and all supplies had to go out from that point by wagon trains. So, many of the larger outfits pulled off the Black Hills trails and went to Idaho.

Bramble and Miner decided to take their outfit to Blackfoot, but I did not want to go and advised them that their train was in no condition to put into service for mountain hauling. The wagons were getting old and many

of the mules had been freighting since 1872. We would not be able to use trail wagons in the mountains but would have to split up the teams, which would take more men to handle them and be more expensive. But they thought best to go to Idaho and we drove through to Cheyenne, about three hundred miles, in fifteen days.

Here we would put the outfit on cars and make the rest of the trip by rail. That was not as easy, however, as it may sound, for all the wagons had to be taken to pieces. By putting the boxes on the floor of the flat cars and piling the wheels and other parts of the running gear into them, we could get four wagons on a car.

These wagons were not the usual farm wagons, but were built especially for freighting and were used entirely for that purpose, as the loads we put on them would have broken down ordinary wagons. The tires were four inches wide where a farm wagon usually has two-inch tires. Then the box of a common wagon is thirty-six inches wide, ten feet long, and twenty-four inches high, while a freight box is forty-two inches wide and fourteen feet long. The boxes for lead wagons are five feet high and those for the trail wagons are four feet, six inches, both heavily braced with oak planks underneath the floor and heavy iron strips running from the oaken braces up the sides of the box to which they are riveted.

It took five cars for the wagons, for we put the cook wagon and the scrap wagon, both ordinary farm wagons, on top of the others and took only twenty freight wagons with us. The mules took five or six cars, for we took the

gray mare and her colts, too, and we had several mules more than the number required for the teams. Our outfit made up the whole train which would seem very short now with only eleven cars, but in 1883 the railroads were not equipped with the powerful engines they have to-day and our train was a heavy load through the mountainous country it had to travel. We arrived in Blackfoot in about two days and spent another week getting the wagons unloaded and set up. Then we were ready to begin hauling.

But I did not take any part in the mining activity of this country, for within a day or two after our arrival I received a letter from John Tennis, who was then located at Little Missouri in the northern part of Dakota Territory, now North Dakota.

The Northern Pacific had built west from the Missouri River and a town had been located where the railroad crosses the Little Missouri. The most picturesque part of the northern Bad Lands could be reached by a short drive from this station and was attracting the attention of many visitors, who came to marvel at the weird and fantastic forms of these strange formations. This region, while not so fascinating as the Bad Lands southeast of the Black Hills, could be reached more easily than the other after the Northern Pacific was built and was famous for its game as well as its scenery, so attracted many Eastern people, some of whom came to hunt but became interested in the cattle business which was getting its start in Dakota at that time.

During the summer of 1883, the eyes of the United

States, if not of the world, were turned toward Little Missouri because of the activities there of the young Frenchman, the Marquis de Mores. The story of his dreams for a city which would rival Omaha that was fast becoming the meat-packing center of the West, of his abattoir and refrigeration plant, of his stage line to the Black Hills, of his cabbages to be raised under glass and forced with rich fertilizers from the abattoir can all be found in the files of the newspapers printed during the time of his residence in America. He was interested in varied projects from New York to San Francisco, and his arrival in any village large enough to have a newspaper was worth an interview of whatever length the editor could give the space.

Tennis had located in the northern Bad Lands after leaving our ranch on Cheyenne River in the spring of 1881, for he had lived the greater part of his life by hunting, and instead of taking up a new occupation when the settlement crowded in around him, he moved out to newer country where game was still plentiful. He had been in the Little Missouri country about two years, hunting and acting as guide for Eastern hunters, and in this way had met the marquis and had been engaged to work for him at the ranch which was being built up near the new town. The marquis had bought land across the river from Little Missouri and was building a town there, which he named Medora after his wife, the daughter of the New York banker, Von Hoffman.

Tennis wrote to me enclosing an offer from the marquis to become his ranch foreman, and as soon as I could get

word to Bramble and Miner and had received their instructions to turn the mule outfit over to one of the men who had been in their employ a long time and who had come to Blackfoot with me, I was ready to leave Idaho.

I bought two saddle horses, one to ride and one to carry my bedding and grub, and struck out to the northeast. I followed up the Snake River to where it turns east and then south above Idaho Falls, and from that point I went on toward the head of the Shoshone. The trail led down this river and the Big Horn to the Yellowstone, but it was now far different traveling through this region than it had been for De Rocheau and me when we went over the same trail in 1870 after leaving Jim Bridger.

Now, there were well-marked trails made by the Indians and by the soldiers who had chased them through the mountains, after the battle with Custer. Ranchmen and cowboys were located along the streams and rode over the prairies after their cattle and horses, for after 1880, when the Northern Pacific had traversed southern Montana, the Yellowstone country settled rapidly and cattle and horse raising became an important industry in all the country west of the Missouri.

Although I had my blankets and camp outfit, I seldom had to use them, and when I did I usually did not camp alone. Often I found a ranch or a herding camp at night or about mealtime, and it was sometimes my pleasure to share my camp with a lone cowboy who had followed a cattle trail too far to return to the ranch for the night. It was a custom throughout the West to treat every stranger

as a guest till he had proven himself unworthy of such hospitality. Every traveler was expected to repay for his accommodations by sharing his bed and grub with some one else when the occasion arose for such courtesy.

Some thirty miles below the mouth of the Shoshone, I stayed overnight with a ranchman living near the Custer battle ground, and the next morning he went with me to look over the scene of that disaster. From my talks with many of the Indians who had fought there and with the soldiers who had been with Bentine and Reno, it was easy to picture just what had occurred on that memorable twenty-fifth of June, 1876.

But no smoke from Indian camp fires, no bark of dogs, or rattle of tepee poles came up from the flat along the Big Horn, as we walked with respect over the ground where so many brave men had met their death. No smell of sweaty horses or creak of saddles, no flash of guns or sabers, no sound of galloping hoofs, no word of cavalry command or Indian battle cry came to us that July day, on the prairie, except in imagination as we bowed our heads where a nation's hero had fought his last battle. Instead, there were rows of crosses, simple wooden pieces, to mark the last camp ground of the men who still guard that sacred field.

I rode on down the Yellowstone to old Fort Keogh, and here the trail leaves the river and goes further south toward Bismarck, having been followed pretty closely by the railroad from that town on the Missouri.

At Little Missouri, or Medora as the marquis called his

town, I found affairs somewhat different than I had anticipated. I had read in the newspapers of his many enterprises all over the country, but had not paid enough attention to be very well informed on their development, except to know that he had great ideas and apparently plenty of financial backing. I had been too busy while on the trail and also in the Hills and at Pierre to keep in touch with events not related to my own work, for a freighter's day was from daylight till dark and often long after that, and what newspapers I had had a chance to read were generally so old by the time I got them that I had heard most of the news through conversation, but that did not give me the details.

When Tennis had written to me, I supposed the marquis had his ranch well established and a bunch of cattle, whose herders I was to manage, feeding in the Bad Lands. Instead I found that his ranch was still in his mind and he was spending his time on the building of his office, residence, and abattoir—that is, he spent what time he stayed in Medora with these buildings, but he lived in his private car and was rushing off to New York or Washington or the Pacific coast at a minute's notice and rushing back as suddenly as he had gone.

The Marquis de Mores was a charming man to meet, but the most casual observer could see he was out of place in the Bad Lands and would doubt his ever being able to adjust himself and his ideas to the country he was undertaking to develop. Also, it was just as unlikely that he would ever be able to develop the location he had

chosen to his ambitious plans. De Mores was not American and could not understand the American people, especially the settlers in the West, who cared nothing for rank or title and judged every man by the way he played the game.

The marquis should have been generally popular, for his many projects pointed toward the rapid development of the Bad Land district and the town of Medora, with closer and better markets for the cattle industry which was the only business of the settlers. But unfortunately, he had come under the influence of several characters who did not have the respect of the community, and these men were advising him to their advantage rather than to his own. Some said he was self-willed and not capable of taking advice, but the trouble was he sought advice from the wrong people and considered only the counsel of men whose opinions agreed with his own. The ones who did not agree with him, he looked upon as enemies who were seeking his ruin.

His poor judgment and inexperience had brought him into an unfortunate affair earlier in the summer, in which the marquis had been led into trouble which was not of his making, through his association with local persons who were involved in a quarrel. He had been with these men when the two factions had "shot it out" and had even been arrested for the murder of a man who was killed in the affray, but had been acquitted. This acquittal, though, did not gain him any favor with the better citizens in the

Bad Lands and his whole outfit was looked upon with suspicion.

This was the situation I found upon my arrival and I was greatly disappointed. I did not like to make my entrance into a new community under the cloud which I realized I would acquire by becoming foreman for De Mores nor could I see any future for his schemes which appeared to me as most impractical. I had left a good job in Idaho to go to Medora, so decided to begin work with the marquis to see what developed before I concluded to sever our relations. There was very little to do, for the ranch had not progressed to the place where it needed a foreman and I spent most of the time hunting with Tennis and getting acquainted with other ranchmen.

During the fall, a number of Eastern men visited Medora to hunt in the Bad Lands and one of them, Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, of New York, was enthusiastic over the possibilities of running cattle along the Little Missouri. The future President spent several weeks in the Bad Lands that fall of 1883, and came under the spell of the prairie to such a degree that, before his departure, he arranged to put cattle out to be cared for on shares, and for the next few years he spent a great deal of time on his Dakota ranch. Tennis and I met his party while on one of our hunts and later in town. But Roosevelt's guides were some of the men who looked with disfavor on the marquis and his dreams and the relations between these two interesting men were never very friendly, although both were prominent figures in the Bad Lands for several years.

I had been in Medora nearly three months, but had done very little except hunt with Tennis and confer with De Mores about the plans for his ranch and cattle. I could not see how he could get cattle in that country for his packing plant, as the grass-fed cattle would not be ready for beef till fall and there was no feed to be bought for them in other seasons, except by shipping it from the corn-raising country, and that was too expensive a proposition. I could not advise him to do what he wanted to do, for it looked to me as if he was simply throwing his money away, and he seemed to think I did not have his interest in mind. We were still as far apart in our ideas as when I first arrived and I began to think I was wasting my time with him, for his bubbles would burst before a great while and then I would be drifting on.

My two younger brothers, Will and Wils, had started a stage line between Huron on the North Western and Mitchell on the Milwaukee, for the building of these two railways had opened thousands of acres for settlement and Eastern visitors were pouring in to look over the prairie and select sites on which to file homestead entries. Often these travelers wanted to go out over one line and return by the other, looking over the country along each route, and a number of stage lines ran between various points along the two railroads.

Leaving Medora, I went to Deadwood for a few days and closed up my affairs with Bramble and Miner. Then I proceeded to Mitchell, where I intended to locate. Will Sutley wanted to sell his interest in the Mitchell-Huron

stage and I bought him out, taking charge of the Huron end of the business.

I little realized that my arrival in Huron would be the beginning of another adventure or that it would be the end of my frontier life, for my adventure ended just as such bold undertakings usually do. In Huron, I met a young lady who became necessary to my immediate and future plans and I took her in for a life partner. That ended the roving life I had led for seventeen years on the frontier and fulfilled my long cherished desire for a happy home.

But the Frontier had been pushed aside by the railroads and by the homesteaders who followed and the "wild West" had been tamed by the pioneers. What romance the West held for the next twenty years was preserved by the ranchmen and cowboys, who in their turn made way for other homesteaders when more of the Sioux Reservation was opened for settlement and the railroads finally built to the Black Hills after their long stop at the Missouri River.

The Frontier is gone. The wild West is gone. The bull trains and the mule outfits live only in the memory of the few men, now living, who were a part of them. The Black Hills are still the attraction for thousands of visitors, not for their rich gold strikes but for scenery and the romantic history which centers around that region.

The famous "bad men" are gone and many of the good ones have taken the "long trail." But the hardships they

endured and the dangers they met with the courage of youth were not in vain, and out of the frontier they helped to conquer, two fine states were created.

To-day splendid roads thread the prairie and autos speed along the trails over which the freight trains toiled. Busy cities and prosperous farms have replaced the country stores and trading posts. And the children and grand-children of the bullwhackers, the mule skinners, the cowboys, and early traders are establishing the homes, building the schools and churches, and serving in honored positions in a great commonwealth.

More than sixty years have passed since I came West to hunt buffalo and many changes have taken place in that time which are beyond the wildest imaginings of my youth. I cannot say that the old times were the best or that I would go back to them if I could. But I am glad that it has been my privilege to have lived on the Last Frontier, to have seen the herds of buffalo roaming over the plains, to have driven Texas longhorns over the old cattle trails, and to have known such men as Jim Bridger, Brigham Young, Kit Carson, and General Custer, whose lives have added so much to the history and romance of the Great West.

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THE LAST FRONTIER

By

ZACK T. SUTLEY

Zack Sutley, hunter, trapper, cowboy, stage driver, soldier in the Wild West of sixty years ago, tells his story without embellishment in this book. He began by shooting buffalo with Buffalo Bill, took lessons in trapping from Kit Carson, worked for Brigham Young, scouted for General Custer, and entertained Jesse James unawares. He was in the Hudson Bay region and on the Texas trail in Deadwood at its wildest time, and helped to found Pierre. He witnessed a stage robbery and a lynching, had various encounters with bad men, and was captured by the Sioux. He includes many anecdotes of men who have since become famous in the West, and he tells one excellent story of Lincoln.

Probably no one else now living has the material for such a narrative as this. Mr. Sutley lets the facts speak for themselves, and his unemotional, laconic way of recounting his experiences heightens their effect.

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